



ANC TODAY

VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

2–8 October 2026

Conversations *with the* President



Our constitutional values are part of our common heritage

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**



■ **N** Heritage Day last week, we celebrated the many languages, traditions and cultures of our people.

It is always heartening on this national day to see South Africans from every community celebrating their own heritage while also honouring the heritage of others.

Over the past week, social media has been filled with such images of black, white, Indian and Coloured South Africans proudly displaying the richness of their cultures and participating in the traditions of their fellow South Africans.

That we have built a country founded on equality and non-racialism, in which every citizen should feel that they belong, is

something we do not take for granted. We pay tribute to the courageous decisions that made democratic South Africa possible.

In 1994, the South African people made a historic choice. We chose to acknowledge the grave injustices and immense suffering of the past while committing ourselves to live together and build a new nation.

Our constitutional order gives expression to the values of non-racialism, non-sexism, equality, democracy and human dignity.

These values are as much our heritage as the cultures we practice and the languages we speak, the traditions we observe and the cultures we celebrate. They express who we are and who we aspire to become.

Heritage is not only what we celebrate. It is also what we defend.

We cannot allow violence against women to define who we are.

The abuse, rape and killing of women is a stain on our national conscience.

We cannot claim to be a society founded on freedom, equality and human dignity while half of our population lives in fear of violence.

We refuse to be defined by xenophobia and intolerance.

The peoples of Africa provided moral and material support to our liberation struggle, and our democracy. Democratic South Africa remains committed to advancing the ideals of African unity and integration.



At the same time, migration must take place within the law. Government has a responsibility to manage our borders effectively, and everyone who lives in South Africa is required to respect our laws.

Racism will never define who we are.

We are determined never to return to the racial division and oppression of our apartheid past.

In 1994, we chose to build one nation from people of different races, cultures and backgrounds. It is a choice that we must continue to renew every day.

Democratic South Africa is committed to correcting the injustices of the past. There is no moral equivalence between redress and discrimination.

There is no equivalence between legitimate, constitutionally grounded measures of redress and the systematic racial oppression of apartheid.

There is no equivalence between measures designed to overcome racial exclusion and the apart-

heid laws that were designed to enforce racial exclusion, dispossession and inequality.

We must remain vigilant against those who seek to undermine our national unity and turn South Africans against one another.

We all have a responsibility to hold our social fabric together.

We must guard against words and actions that polarise communities, inflame public opinion and reopen the wounds of our past.

The Constitution guarantees freedom of expression. But with this freedom comes responsibility.

In a country where women live in fear of abuse and are killed every day, the public humiliation of women is not harmless. It reinforces the attitudes that sustain discrimination and violence.

At a time when undocumented migration is fuelling social tensions, inflammatory statements about foreign nationals are dangerous and irresponsible.

In a country with unacceptably high levels of violent crime, lan-

guage that glorifies killing or encourages hostility has no place in our public life.

At a time when unemployment is high and we need to grow our economy and attract investment, travelling to foreign capitals to spread the falsehood of a “white genocide” and discourage investment in one’s own country is neither responsible nor patriotic.

We may be a diverse nation, but we are united by the constitutional values that make us South African.

These values transcend race, gender, language, culture and geography.

Guided by these values, let us continue to work together to overcome the common challenges we face.

Every day, through our words and our deeds, we must renew the choice we made in 1994 and affirmed when we adopted our Constitution: the choice to build this country together.

That is our shared heritage. It is also our shared responsibility.

ANC STATEMENT ON THE COST OF LIVING AND THE MEDIUM-TERM BUDGET

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE cost of living remains the first hardship at the door. The economy contracted in the second quarter. Unemployment has risen to 33,6 per cent. The Reserve Bank raised the repurchase (repo) rate to 7,25 per cent. The fuel price has risen by more than a third over the course of the year, and it is carrying food and transport with it. The African National Congress will not pretend that these numbers are anything other than hard for a household that is already stretched. The movement is pressing for relief that can be funded and shown: the equitable share and the water and municipal infrastructure grants, and the capacity of municipalities to spend them; protection of the social grants; and relief at the point where the household is hurt, including the fuel levy and the basket of zero-rated goods.

The movement also asks South Africans to hold what is already in place, because it was won by this movement and it is paid for every month. Through the government led by the African National Congress, registered indigent households receive free basic water and free basic electricity, and free basic sanitation and refuse removal, funded through the equitable share that municipalities receive. Social grants reach the aged, people with disabilities and millions of children every month. The great majority of our schools are no-fee schools, and

the school nutrition programme feeds millions of learners every school day. Primary health care is free at the point of use. Basic foodstuffs are zero-rated for value-added tax. Scholar transport, subsidised housing and student financial aid carry households that would otherwise carry nothing. That is a social wage, and no household should be persuaded that it fell from the sky.

The strain on a household today is severe, and two causes must be named honestly. The first is the global conflict that has driv-

en the oil and the fertiliser price and carried food and transport with it. The second is closer to home: the progress in transforming the economy has been too slow. Where a handful of firms set the price of food, of fuel, of data and of banking, no grant and no rebate will reach far enough. Breaking that concentration is the work of the next period, and the African National Congress says so plainly. These are matters for the Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement, and the movement's deployees in government have been directed to carry them there.





ANC WELCOMES THE REPATRIATION OF FALLEN FREEDOM FIGHTERS FROM ANGOLA AS AN ACT OF HISTORICAL JUSTICE

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress welcomes the Angola phase of the Exile Repatriation Project as an important act of historical justice and the fulfilment of a solemn obligation to those who gave their lives for our liberation. These freedom fighters, many of them combatants of Umkhonto we Sizwe, left their homes and families to confront an apartheid regime that denied the majority of our people their humanity and political rights. They fell in the struggle for a free South Africa, leaving families whose grief was compounded by separation and the inability to lay their loved ones to rest at home.

The physical and spiritual repatriation of our fallen comrades affirms that the passage of time does not diminish our responsibility to them. The ANC recog-

nises the profound meaning of calling their spirits home in accordance with the cultural, traditional and religious practices of their families. For our movement, this process restores dignity, honours sacrifice and addresses the enduring wounds inflicted by apartheid. It must also sustain our national commitment to recovering and identifying mortal remains wherever possible.

Angola occupies an honoured place in the history of our liberation struggle. Its people stood with us when solidarity demanded courage and carried a heavy price.

As we honour our fallen comrades, we reaffirm the bonds forged through a common struggle against colonialism, racism and apartheid. Their histories

must be preserved and taught to younger generations so that the conditions under which our freedom was won, and the African solidarity that sustained it, remain part of our national consciousness.

The ANC stands with the affected families and calls on South Africans to honour these patriots through a renewed commitment to the society for which they fought. Their sacrifices place a responsibility upon us to advance the unfinished work of liberation by confronting poverty, inequality, unemployment and racism. Bringing our comrades home must deepen our resolve to build a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa in which freedom finds expression in the dignity and wellbeing of every person.

Between candour and coercion — why SA won't bend to Washington's dictates

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

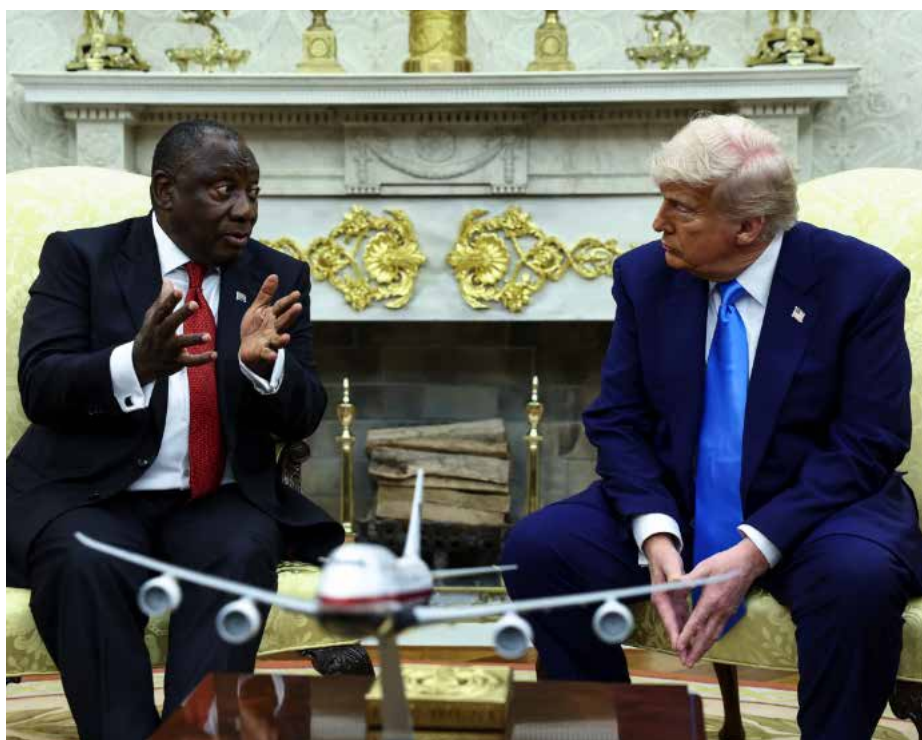
AMBASSADOR Brent Bozell III's recent opinion piece in *Daily Maverick* titled, *SA to pay the price of inaction as United States runs out of patience*, is a candid statement.

We welcome candour, even when it arrives with a visa restriction policy attached. It is better to engage with an honest expression of the American administration's position than to sustain a diplomatic fiction that serves neither country.

As the African National Congress, we believe that the relationship between South Africa and the United States is too important to be reduced to a checklist of demands. But since the ambassador has publicly presented five "Asks", it would be disrespectful not to respond to him.

When many of us in South Africa watched Ambassador Bozell's Senate confirmation hearing, we braced ourselves for the very rhetoric we are now witnessing. Yet, upon his arrival, he struck a surprisingly positive and cooperative tone. While some among us cautioned against being lulled into a false sense of hope, the ANC chose to embrace the ambassador in good faith. Alas, it appears our optimism was misplaced.

Former President Nelson Mandela once recounted Oliver Tam-



bo's reaction to the news that the National Party had won the 1948 elections. Rather than despair, OR Tambo welcomed the clarity of the outcome, noting, "*Now we know exactly what we will be dealing with*". Today, we find ourselves echoing those sentiments.

In a recent engagement at AfriForum's community safety centre in Centurion, Ambassador Bozell went so far as to declare himself an Ambassador of AfriForum. This was unsurprising, although we did not expect him to say it out loud.

I will not dwell extensively on the historical baggage of the individuals historically associated with AfriForum, nor their ideological

links to the Ossewabrandwag and its dark flirtations with Nazism during World War 2. I raise it only in line with OR Tambo's sentiments, as amaXhosa would put it: ***Ingcuka ide yalukhulula ufele lwegusha*** (The wolf even sheds the sheepskin).

The Ambassador's article outlines the US Administration's "Five Asks" of South Africa. In diplomatic parlance, "asks" are requests, but in Bozell's formulation and tone, they read as demands.

The assertion is that to enjoy a "*constructive relationship*" with the current US Administration, South Africa is expected to unthinkingly acquiesce to these dictates.

Once again, as a sovereign democracy like the United States of America, we owe it to our citizens and our partners to respond with facts, rigour and a commitment to our Constitutional principles!

On the chant, Kill the Boer, and 'rural crime'

The Ambassador asks that President Ramaphosa condemn the singing of this slogan. The ANC has addressed this matter, and indeed so has the President of the Republic.

Following the Concourt ruling against AfriForum, I stated clearly that: *"No member of the ANC today will be allowed to sing Kill the Boer. Simple as that. Even if the Constitutional Court said you can sing, why should we sing Kill the Boer in a democratic dispensation?"*

Ambassador Bozell must understand that South Africa is a society governed by the rule of law. We have robust legislation against hate speech and incitement to violence, overseen by Chapter 9 institutions like the South African Human Rights Commission and an independent

judiciary. Organisations like AfriForum have consistently utilised these very legal avenues to raise their grievances.

Ambassador Bozell may disagree with a judicial outcome. He cannot reasonably ask a President of the Republic to treat an independent court's judgment as though it were an instruction from the executive, which can simply be withdrawn.

I restate what I said last year: *"As the ANC, we are not chanting 'kill the boer, kill the farmer' because we don't believe it is relevant at the present moment, but we would not stop others from chanting. It is not illegal as it is now defined by the Constitutional Court. As the ANC, we wouldn't chant that slogan – nor would we water it down to 'kiss the boer' – because when we chanted that slogan, it had a particular meaning".*

The safety of farmers is a duty of the South African state. So is the safety of farmworkers and everyone else living in rural communities. Bozell asks that rural crime be made a priority with a funded plan even as he concedes there is already a National Rural Safety

Strategy. Conveniently, he omits to mention that the strategy covers farms, smallholdings and surrounding communities. Government has reported its implementation across rural police station areas. That does not mean the work is finished, far from it.

The discussion should focus on whether the strategy is effective, where it is failing and what resources and accountability will improve it. If the United States genuinely wishes to offer practical support, as Bozell states, we should examine that offer constructively.

While we are at it, we must also describe the victims accurately. In the 4th quarter of 2024/25, the SAPS recorded six murders in farming communities: two farmers, three employees and one farm dweller. Those categories do not, by themselves, establish the race of each victim, and a single quarter cannot settle every question about rural crime. They do establish why it would be wrong to speak as though only farm owners face danger. Every one of those deaths warrants our attention.

We know that because of the legacy of Apartheid – which systematically underdeveloped rural Bantustans into reservoirs of cheap labour – the majority of rural areas are inhabited by Black South Africans. Consequently, the overwhelming majority of victims of rural and farm crimes are Black.

To frame rural crime as a targeted racial issue is to allow oneself to be led down the garden path by AfriForum. It appears Bozell is content to act in lockstep with them, fulfilling what US Deputy Secretary of State for the Bureau



of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Samuel Samson, just a few days ago at Washington's National Press Club, disturbingly termed a partnership of "civilisational allies".

On expropriation without compensation

In his recent media engagements, Ambassador Bozell consistently expresses a fear, drawn from history, of arbitrary seizure of private property. We understand that fear.

However, we must gently remind him that South Africa has no such history – except, of course, for the brutal land dispossessions carried out against the Black majority under colonialism and Apartheid.

It is important to address the question of property rights without caricature. Section 25 of our Constitution prohibits arbitrary deprivation of property. It explicitly states that "no law may permit arbitrary deprivation of property".

The Constitution permits expropriation under law for a public purpose or in the public interest, with compensation that is just and equitable in the circumstances. It also requires the state to foster equitable access to land. Thus we have a duty to honour both the protection of rights and the obligation to remedy dispossession.

Because they are determined to sustain the boogiemán image of a Communist ANC, what AfriForum will not tell Bozell is that it was actually the ANC which proposed and championed this Section 25 of the Constitution during the negotiations at Codesa, precisely to protect property rights



while mandating land reform.

The 2024 Expropriation Act does not authorise indiscriminate confiscation or arbitrary seizures of private property. In fact, it restricts nil compensation to four narrowly defined situations: "land speculation, abandoned land (or buildings), unused state land... and land where past state subsidies and investment equal or exceed the market value". These are examples, not an automatic rule. The circumstances of each case still matter.

The Act also requires notice to affected owners and rights holders, an explanation of the proposed expropriation and compensation

offer and an opportunity to object. Compensation disputes may be taken to court.

Rightly, Ambassador Bozell says the Act is under judicial review. Our respect for property rights includes respect for the courts charged with determining that challenge.

On BEE and equity equivalent programmes

Ambassador Bozell critiques our Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies, labelling them a "burdensome and inefficient race-based regulatory environment". Yet, in the same breath, he admits that American

companies operate here at a massive scale, creating jobs and building infrastructure. American companies have operated profitably in South Africa for decades, including under the very empowerment framework *the Ambassador describes as “burdensome and inefficient”*. They have made substantial returns.

One would expect an administration led by business-minded leaders to celebrate this mutual prosperity. Instead, the impatience seems targeted. Looking closely at the telecommunications and mining sectors that Ambassador Bozell highlights, the true objectives become clear, which is to secure unfettered access for ventures like Starlink and the extraction of Rare Earth Minerals.

We welcome foreign investment – including recent low-orbit satellite investments by Amazon – but such investments must respect the laws of the Republic and contribute to the empowerment and economic inclusion of the historically marginalised.

The ANC remains committed to broad-based black economic empowerment as a necessary instrument to redress centuries of deliberate exclusion. However, we have also always understood that the form such empowerment takes must be responsive to economic realities.

Equity equivalents already exist within South Africa’s empowerment framework, and many US companies are complying without any negative impact on their operations and bottom line. President Ramaphosa has explained their purpose, as allowing qualifying multinationals to contribute to skills, enterprise development and other transformation goals

where their global structures prevent local equity sales.

The government has indicated that it intends to pursue legislative change to allow such programmes to complement ownership requirements. Those proposals must be judged by whether they expand connectivity and meaningful participation by South Africans who were excluded from ownership for generations. Mining likewise requires careful attention to the rights and opportunities of workers and host communities.

Finally, we are willing to discuss how our rules can work better and attract more investment, but sector rules cannot be waived by diplomatic agreement, nor can they be imposed from Washington.

The question is not whether foreign companies can operate in South Africa – they have and continue to do so successfully. The question is whether they are willing to do so as partners in our national project, rather than as extractors.

South Africa wants American investment. We want a partnership

that builds resilient supply chains, deepens industrial cooperation and creates value from our resources. But we will not dismantle the instruments of redress that are essential to our social stability and our constitutional order to secure that investment.

Ambassador Bozell concludes that South Africa’s response shows it does not want a constructive relationship with the United States. That conclusion is mistaken. We want and value our relationship with the United States immensely. We also want a relationship in which disagreement does not become a test of loyalty and South African constitutional processes are given the respect we accord to those of the United States.

Our democratic task remains to build a united, non-racial and non-sexist society in which every South African belongs, united in our diversity. We will continue to pursue it with humility about our shortcomings and firmness about our right to independently determine our destiny. That is the basis on which we extend our hand to the United States: as a friend and as an equal.



Institutions do not have courage. PEOPLE DO.

The Ahmed Kathrada Centenary Project Launch

■ Speech Delivered By **MAC MAHARAJ**



OUR country is passing through a critical moment in its continuing journey to build one nation on the understanding that, in all our diversity, we are one people.

The foundational principles of the society we committed ourselves to building are enshrined in our Constitution of 1996: equality, non-racialism, non-sexism, unity and democracy. These principles are protected by the supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law.

Good governance is indispensable to making that constitutional vision a lived reality. We cannot allow the difficulties of the present conjuncture to become a moment in which that historic project is derailed.

There have been other moments in our post-apartheid history when the nation-building project has been seriously endangered. It is worth recalling how our society responded. They remind us that the dangers and challenges we confront today can also be overcome.

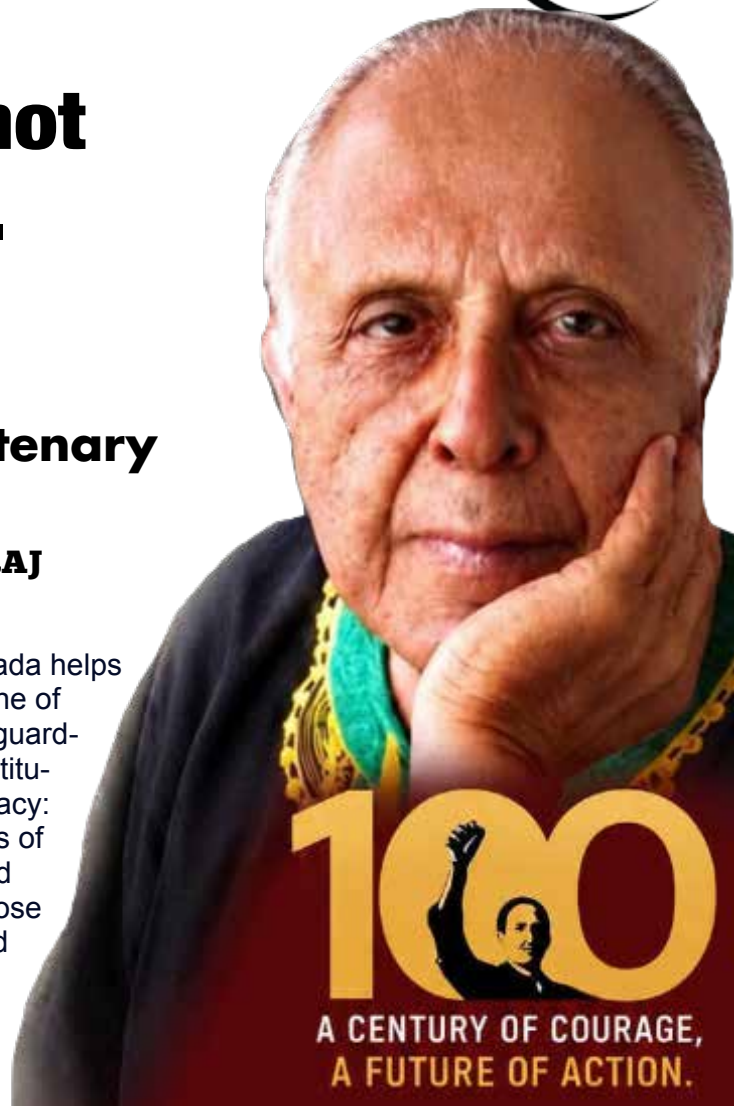
Celebrating the life of Ahmed

“Kathy” Kathrada helps us focus on one of the essential guardrails of a constitutional democracy: the willingness of citizens — and particularly those who have held positions of leadership — to accept responsibility and, when circumstances demand it, to speak truth to power.

I re-read Kathy’s letter to the then President of South Africa and of the ANC, Jacob Zuma, dated 31 March 2016.

Every sentence of that letter conveys the pain that moved Kathy to speak directly to the President. But overshadowing that pain is something even more important: his sense of responsibility.

Kathy began his letter by establishing his credentials as a “loyal and disciplined” member of the ANC. He reminded the President that throughout his political life he had refrained from publicly expressing differences with the leaders of his organisation. He



explained that he would depart from that tradition only when matters of sufficient importance compelled him to do so.

And then he said:
“Today I have decided to break with that tradition.”

Those words are important.

For Kathy, speaking out was not an act of disloyalty. Nor was it an easy gesture of public criticism. It was an agonising decision by somebody who had spent virtually his entire life serving a movement, who understood discipline, and who understood the obligations that membership of a collective imposed upon the individual. But he also understood that loyalty could never mean silence

when the fundamental values of the movement and the Constitution were at stake.

That is the lesson I want to draw from Kathy's action.

What were the circumstances in which he wrote that letter? Allegations concerning the influence of the Gupta family were already in the public domain and complaints had begun to reach the Public Protector. But the Public Protector had not yet completed the investigation that would later produce the State of Capture report. There had been no judicial commission of inquiry. The extraordinary scale and systematic character of what subsequently came to be called "*State Capture*" had not yet been established through those processes.

Much of what South Africans knew came from investigative journalism, public allegations, political debate and the disturbing events unfolding before them. And yet Kathy concluded that he could no longer remain silent.

Significantly, he wrote his letter on 31 March 2016 – the very day on which the Constitutional Court delivered its judgment in the Nkandla matter. The Court held that the President had failed to uphold, defend and respect the Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic.

For Kathy, a line had been crossed.

Here was a man who had spent twenty-six years in prison in the struggle to bring about a democratic South Africa. He had lived through the transition from apartheid to democracy. He had participated in building the new constitutional order. He therefore



understood that the Constitution was not simply another document adopted in 1996. It embodied the democratic promise for which generations had struggled. When he believed that that promise was endangered, his understanding of loyalty required him to speak. It was one of the most difficult choices of his life.

This is what makes Kathy's intervention so relevant to us today.

Constitutional democracy cannot survive through institutions alone. Constitutions, courts, Parliament, Chapter Nine institutions and an independent media are indispensable. But ultimately their effectiveness also depends upon a democratic culture – upon citizens and leaders who are prepared to defend the values those institutions embody.

There comes a moment when silence itself becomes a choice.

Kathy reached such a moment in March 2016.

His example asks a difficult question of every generation: when the values to which we have committed ourselves are endan-

gered, do we remain spectators, or do we accept responsibility for defending them?

That, I believe, is one of the most important legacies we should draw from Ahmed Kathrada as we mark his centenary.

Our Constitution provides for several institutions that function as checks and balances to ensure that the pursuit of our Constitutional vision is not derailed.

There are times when voices have been raised that we have too many such institutions.

Our Constitution deliberately dispersed power. It created an independent judiciary, protected a free media, and established institutions such as the Public Protector, the Human Rights Commission, the Auditor General and the Independent Electoral Commission. These are not unnecessary complications of democracy. They are safeguards against the concentration and abuse of power.

We know why these safeguards matter.

Under apartheid, parliamentary

sovereignty enabled a white minority Parliament to deny fundamental human rights to the majority. When its courts stood in its way, Parliament could change the law – and even alter the composition of institutions – to overcome them.

Our constitutional democracy was deliberately designed to prevent a return to such unrestrained power.

Our own democratic era has shown that Parliament itself can fail to provide an effective check on executive power. The Constitutional Court's 31 March 2016 judgment found that Zuma had failed to uphold, defend and respect the Constitution in relation to the Public Protector's remedial action. Parliament subsequently rejected an opposition impeachment motion.

Yet when one institution failed, others continued to function – the courts, the Public Protector, investigative journalists and civil society.

What this experience tells us is that part of the strength of our Constitution lies in the very mul-

tiplicity of checks and balances that it provides.

The existence of these institutions does not automatically assure us that they will function effectively. They work effectively because people choose to make them work.

And today the evidence emerging before commissions of inquiry is again reminding us how vulnerable institutions become when the individuals entrusted with them fail to exercise independent judgment. We should, of course, await the commissions' findings. On 17 September, Justice Madlanga himself said that evidence before the Madlanga Commission showed "*indications of serious criminality within the criminal justice system,*" while explicitly cautioning that definitive findings must await assessment of all the evidence.

But the broader lesson is already familiar: no constitutional architecture can protect itself.

At the Madlanga Commission, persons holding high office in the justice system demonstrate that despite living and working in a

constitutional democracy for thirty years, they have no appreciation that our Constitution places an obligation on us not to carry out a task or implement an order that is illegal and/or unconstitutional.

A constitutional democracy requires something more of those who exercise public power than obedience to authority. It requires judgment. It requires integrity. And ultimately it requires each person to accept responsibility for what he or she does.

That is precisely what Kathy did. He could have sheltered behind party discipline. He could have told himself that loyalty required silence. Instead, he accepted personal responsibility.

State Capture was not resisted by one heroic institution. It was resisted through the cumulative actions of journalists who investigated, citizens who spoke, civil society organisations that litigated, a Public Protector who investigated, judges who upheld the Constitution, and ultimately a judicial commission that exposed in extraordinary detail what had happened.

Every institution depends ultimately upon individuals deciding whether they will remain silent, comply, look away – or accept responsibility.

Kathrada has therefore bequeathed us something more enduring than the memory of a remarkable life.

He reminds us that there will be moments in the life of every society, and especially in a democracy, when loyalty to an organisation, a leader, a colleague or even a lifelong colleague comes into



conflict with loyalty to principle.

At such moments we have to choose.

Kathy chose.

He chose loyalty to the values for which he had struggled throughout his life. He chose the Constitution. And he accepted responsibility for the consequences of speaking.

That is why his example matters today.

In all the trials and travails confronting our country, I remain an optimist.

I am an optimist not because I underestimate the dangers we face, nor because I believe that our institutions are incapable of failing.

We know that institutions can fail. We know that people can abuse power. We know the damage that can be done when good people remain silent.

I suppose it is necessary that I state where I stand at the present moment, especially in the light of the forthcoming local government elections.

There should be no doubt about my vote. I have lived through many moments that required a reset of the ANC. Even at this moment I see myself in a lover's quarrel with the ANC.

I remain an optimist for another reason.

Our history also teaches us that human beings possess the capacity to stand up, to say no, to accept responsibility and to act according to principle – some-



times at considerable personal cost.

Institutions matter. Laws matter. Constitutions matter.

But institutions do not have courage. People do.

That was the courage Ahmed

Kathrada displayed in March 2016.

As we celebrate his centenary, perhaps the most fitting tribute we can pay him is to ask ourselves a simple question:

When our own moment comes, what will we choose?

COSATU notes with extreme dismay the US Embassy's strange media festival intended to ridicule South Africa's constitutional sovereignty

THE Congress of South African Trade Unions notes with extreme dismay the United States (US) Embassy's strange media festival that is clearly intended to ridicule and undermine South Africa's hard-won constitutional sovereignty. Whilst the sober majority of South Africans will simply blue tick these as juvenile antics best ignored, they cross all norms of internationally acceptable behaviour for a diplomatic mission.

We appreciate South Africa's constitutionally enshrined rights to freedom of speech and the media are internationally acclaimed as attested by our ranking at number 27 in Reporters Without Borders' World Press Freedom Index, as compared to the US' alarming rank of 64. However, these should not be abused by any diplomatic mission, more so to spread blatantly false information about South Africa. It is ironic that the US State Department did not hesitate to expel South Africa's former Ambassador to the US for a single online comment yet sees no wrong in their Ambassador running a media campaign against his host government.

The litany of complaints by the US Ambassador makes little



sense and bears less relation to reality. The Ambassador complains that South Africa has not responded to the US' Five Asks, then states that government's response is wholly inadequate or a complete rejection of US demands, then meanders off to say that two of the Asks have been resolved, two are close to being concluded and one is a just a

weird obsession with a song that the African National Congress led Alliance and most South Africans stopped singing in 1994 with the advent of democracy.

South Africa is a **sovereign member of the international community and a constitutional democracy**, not some vassal state or an unruly bunch of

natives who should be told what is good for them.

The not-so-subtle threats to South Africa of further consequences must end. Bullying has not worked with Canada or Greenland amongst others; it will not work with South Africa.

The US Embassy should embrace internationally acceptable diplomatic norms and engage with the South African government on how bilateral relations can be reset. Matters of legislation, policies and budgets are the sole domain of the South African people and exercised through their democratically elected government.

Tweeting inanities may be entertaining but does nothing to enhance relations.

Whilst the US Embassy is free to meet whomever it pleases. It would do well to grasp that associating with extreme fringe and Whites only groupings who seemingly miss the dark days of apartheid, does immeasurable damage to the standing of the US in the eyes of ordinary South Africans who carry the scars of apartheid's very real horrors.

We encourage the US Embassy to embrace South Africa in all its diversity, visit a police station in a Black or Coloured township if they are keen to understand our unacceptably high levels of crime or meet the Black, Coloured and White workers at Premier Group's canning factories and neighbouring farms in Tulbagh who are on the verge of losing their jobs due to the punitive tariffs imposed upon South

African exports to the US.

COSATU appreciates that the Embassy's antics do not reflect the values of ordinary Americans, in particular students, workers and churches, who stood with the liberation struggle against apartheid. We are heartened that despite these attempts to humiliate South Africa; American investors, tourists and even immigrants are voting with their feet and coming to enjoy South Africa, with all our challenges.

The Federation commends the mature and strategic patience exercised by President Cyril Ramaphosa and the South African government.

We stand with government as it navigates these complex times.



Building Pathways for South Africa's Youth

■ By **NONCEBA MHLAULI**

YOUTH unemployment remains one of the most pressing challenges confronting South Africa. For millions of young people, completing school, obtaining a qualification or acquiring a skill does not automatically translate into employment. The distance between learning and earning remains too wide, and closing that gap requires deliberate intervention by the democratic state, working alongside business, labour and civil society.

This is the task of the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI), established in 2020 to build pathways through which young people can access employment, workplace experience, skills development, entrepreneurship and other earning opportunities. It recognises that there can be no single solution to a challenge as complex as youth unemployment.

The results for the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year demonstrate both the scale of this work and the distance we still need to travel.

Between April and June 2026, young people secured 139 693 earning opportunities through the National Pathway Management Network (NPMN). Of these, 106 093 were secured through SA Youth and a further 33 600 earn-

ing and learning opportunities through the Employment Services of South Africa. SA Youth has now surpassed six million registered young people, while close to 70% of opportunities accessed through the platform have gone to young women.

These numbers matter, but we must be clear about what they represent. An earning opportunity does not necessarily mean a permanent job. It may include workplace experience, work-integrated learning or paid service. Since the inception of the PYEI, young

Young people secured 139 693 earning opportunities through the NPMN.

In the first quarter of the new financial year, **106 093 earning opportunities** were secured by young people through the SA Youth platform. A further **33 600 earning and learning opportunities** were secured on ESSA.



employment & labour

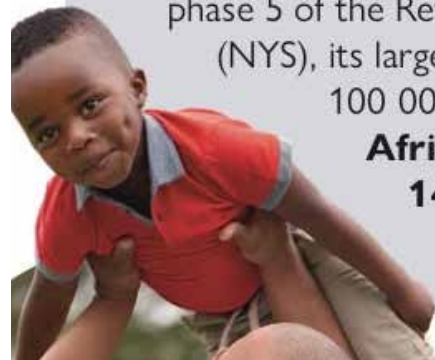
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Employment and Labour
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



people have accessed more than 2.6 million temporary earning opportunities. These opportunities provide income and experience, but they must increasingly become bridges towards sustainable livelihoods.

The private sector has an indispensable role to play. During the first quarter, the Youth Employment Service placed 5 244 young people into workplace experience opportunities. Since the PYEI began, 233 393 workplace experience opportunities have been delivered, 72% through YES and 28% through the Department of Higher Education and Training and the SETAs.

We must also recognise that employment by an established employer cannot be the only pathway. Young South Africans must be supported to become entrepreneurs and create sustainable



An additional 2 866 young people were recruited for Phase 5 of the Revitalised National Youth Service.

The first quarter of the financial year saw the recruitment of an additional **2 866** young people into phase 5 of the Revitalised National Youth Service (NYS), its largest phase yet, which will recruit 100 000 young people across **South Africa**. To date, the NYS has placed **140 922** young people in paid service opportunities across its five phases.

livelihoods. During the quarter, the National Youth Development Agency provided 5214 enterprise support opportunities, while enterprise support across the broader ecosystem has reached

277349 opportunities since inception.

As we mark 50 years since the 1976 Soweto Uprising, we should remember that young people have never been passive observers of South Africa's history. They have shaped it. Our responsibility today is to ensure that they are equally empowered to shape South Africa's economic future.

The next phase must therefore be about both scale and sustainability. We must strengthen the connection between education and the needs of the economy, deepen partnerships with employers, support youth enterprise and ensure that opportunities lead to meaningful economic progression.

Young people do not need promises. They need accessible pathways to skills, experience, income, enterprise and sustainable livelihoods. Building those pathways is not only a youth development imperative. It is fundamental to building the inclusive and transformed economy envisaged by our democratic project.

Supporting young people to build their enterprises.

In the first quarter of the financial year, young people continued to receive direct support for their enterprises. A total of **5 214** financial and non-financial enterprise opportunities were provided by the National Youth Development Agency in Q1.



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





Ethical Leadership Central to Fixing Criminal Justice System Rot

■ By **DR. PINGLA UDIT**

WHO would have thought thirty-one years later South Africa would face challenges from coalition instability, organised crime, corruption, public mistrust, and weak policy execution?

Notwithstanding, South Africa has major achievements globally, including being part of multi-lateral institutions like the United Nations, BRICS, the G20, the African Union, a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, and other specialized groupings. South Africa also weaves support for the Palestine cause at the International Court of Justice.

South Africa mirrors global issues where corruption is high at the levels of government. Criminal enterprises flourish, creating daily hardships through cash-in-transit heists, taxi industry wars, energy crisis, damage and destruction of infrastructure from water pipes, copper theft, the construction industry, and endangered flora and

fauna continue into the 7th Administration.

The architecture of daily crime levels prevails both on the street-end and brain-end, ranging from socio-economic opportunistic crimes, murder and house robbery, gender-violence, social ills of alcoholism, tobacco contraband, gangsterism, loss or theft of civilian and police-issued firearms, kidnapping for ransom, and extortion crimes. Transnational crime issues include vehicle theft, drug cartels, human trafficking, endangered wildlife species, and precious metals smuggling.

The brain-end of the crime, according to Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, ***From Gangs to Grey Agents*** states: South Africa's organised crime economy is not just the work of gangs and enterprise kingpins. It endures because a grey layer of professional enablers-lawyers, accountants, logistic firms, security providers, and real estate companies-quiet-

ly provide the logistical and operational lifeblood that keeps criminal organisations nimble and resilient (October 2025).

In addition, illicit trade by criminal tenderpreneurs to government tenders and procurement supply chains.

The Prevention of Organised Crime (POCA, Act 121 of 1998) to: *“combat organized crime, money-laundering and criminal gang activity.”* There is ongoing progress in utilising the Act. The National Anti-Corruption Advisory Council Final Report (August 2025) states: *“the principle of preventing corruption through robust governance, transparency, and accountability should be given greater emphasis to mitigate corruption risks, thereby reducing the need for costly reactive measures.”* A more fastidious approach is necessary to batten down corruption.

The influence of social media and the development of technology

make it easy to do cyber scams and cybercrime.

The United Nations Convention on Cyber Crime (October 2025): *“marks a critical juncture in international efforts to govern digital technologies, to create a framework to combat cybercrime and establish obligations such as a range of domestic law enforcement capabilities, surveillance powers, cross-border cooperation between law enforcement agencies, and the exchange of electronic data.”* The Convention cites that it should be in alignment with international human rights law.

Mistra Report (2025) on The State of the South African State -Capacity and Skills reads: *“Many state institutions suffer from inadequate technical capacity, weak professional cultures, high vacancy rates, and poor leadership, which undermine both policy-making and execution. There are also shortages in the skills of financial management, engineering, and planning. Yet, alongside this erosion, there have been determined efforts by reform-minded leaders, civil servants, and activists to restore the state’s capacity and capabilities.”*

A significant development in October 2025 has been South Africa’s removal from grey listing by the Financial Action Task Force, in meeting all financing standards.

State capture is a pernicious form and is a consequence of governance failures. Criminals, it turns out, are more sophisticated than the police, prosecutors, and correctional services with access to digital technology and resources. The mistrust and trust deficit in the criminal justice sector is aggravated by deep infiltration



into state organs, external actors having an influence, and the role of underworld crime syndicates. This does not augur well for political stability, economic growth, and development in the short term.

Crime has an impact on families. Despite a growing middle class, there is an existential threat with high levels of inequality, unemployment, and food insecurity. The youth face a high rate of unemployment and uncertainty for their future. The unemployed graduate suffers from anxiety, depression, and the risk of suicidal ideation. Statistics South Africa foregrounds an unequal society with a Gini coefficient of around 0.63 to 0.67, depending on the dataset.

Under apartheid, the police used convicts to commit crimes and return them to prison after committing crimes. Butana Nofome-la’s confession after he was sentenced to death (1989), that he was involved in a police assassination squad known as Vlakplaas, is a case in point. Another example is that of Andre Stander, a member of the South African Police in the 1970s, who led a double life as a robber.

In 1994, under the Constitution of the Republic, there was hope for change and transformation into a Community Protection Service. As in most post-colonial societies, the police now hold military titles and are unequal in their ranks. The South African Police Service needs an integrated internal database system and a virtual link to court records. Crime statistics need to be a priority and released weekly. The trajectory of crime during the new dispensation has varied depending on which administration seeks to make a difference.

The need for Guardrails

What needs to be done? To reconnect our principles and reimagine South Africa, thirty-one years later, with political maturity and policy discipline, in applying governance *“guardrails,” “prioritizing capacity and management,” “leadership and alignment”* in skills, competency, and integrity. Together, these metaphors form a leadership compass for ethical governance and nation-building.

Guardrails should enable political entities to set non-negotiable ethical boundaries to articulate integrity, accountability, service,

and inclusion that no short-term political gain can override. To focus on a few national priorities (anti-corruption, security sector reform, energy security, and education reform) and develop a national strategic planning framework with guardrails to prevent constant shifts with each new administration. Leadership guardrails, so advisors can help political leaders to stay within constitutional limits, as *“Our Constitution is not a political tool; it is a moral compass,”* emphasises.

On prioritization and capacity management, it is important as the state has limited national resources. Advisors to help government leaders prioritise policies that deliver maximum socio-economic return in different sectors.

Lastly, on leadership and alignment, the government should be staffed with skilled, service-oriented people with a shared vision and commitment to national interest and public safety, over personal gain. This action in the journey of governance is fundamental to building trust and long-term credibility, given the groundswell of resistance.

Thought leaders and advisors to government have an opportunity and a responsibility to reframe political leadership around discipline, purpose, and integrity.

The interim and final report of the Madlanga Commission of Inquiry should advance urgent reform, provide foresight to thwart state capture and criminality and to restore trust and integrity in the criminal justice sector to serve without fear or favour.

Dr. Pingla Udit is a political sociologist.



The Revolution Must Reach the Block: Rebuilding the ANC from Below

■ By **SASABONA MANGANYE**

AS the African National Congress prepares for the 2026 Local Government Elections, it must confront a question that goes beyond electoral performance: how does a liberation movement renew its relationship with the masses and rebuild the organisational capacity required to advance the National Democratic Revolution?

This is the deeper question behind the ANC's electoral challenges.

The answer cannot be found in election posters, large rallies or an intensified campaign during the final weeks. Those are instruments of mobilisation, not substitutes for political organisation.

The ANC's renewal must be-

gin with rebuilding its presence among the people, particularly among the working class and poor communities whose material conditions remain at the centre of the National Democratic Revolution.

The Block Leader Strategy offers a practical organisational response to this challenge. It should not be understood merely as an electoral mechanism for identifying voters. Its greater significance lies in rebuilding the ANC's political connection with society from below.

The material terrain of the revolution

Our understanding of politics should begin with material conditions.

People experience the state through the concrete circumstances of their lives: whether there is reliable electricity and water, whether refuse is collected, whether roads and public transport function, whether housing is available, whether communities are safe and whether young people can access economic opportunities.

These are not isolated service-delivery complaints. They are expressions of broader social and economic relations shaped by South Africa's history of colonialism, apartheid and unequal ownership and access to resources.

The National Democratic Revolution therefore cannot be separated from the transformation of these conditions.

Local government is one of the principal terrains on which this transformation becomes tangible. Municipal institutions determine much of what communities encounter every day, making local government both an arena of state capacity and a site of political struggle.

For the ANC, this creates a direct organisational obligation: the movement must understand the conditions under which people live if it is to organise them around a programme of transformation.

The organisational gap

The ANC's traditional structures, branches, voting districts (Sub-Branch), zones and regions, remain essential. But organisational structures are meaningful only when they translate into sustained political work.

The danger arises when the organisation knows its electoral

statistics better than it knows its communities.

A ward can appear secure in aggregate figures while particular streets contain growing political disengagement, declining participation or deep dissatisfaction with local conditions.

The solution is not more sophisticated spreadsheets.

It is organised political knowledge from the ground.

This is where the block becomes important.

The organisational chain should reach from:

Household → Street → Block → Voting District → Ward → Zone → Region.

The Block Leader should not only focus on election work, should provide the connection between the formal political structure and the daily life of the community.

Their task must be to know the area, establish relationships, listen to residents, identify concerns, mobilise participation and communicate information back into the organisation.

In doing so, the ANC gets to understand society not simply through election results, but through direct political engagement.

From voter identification to political organisation

There is a risk that any Block Leader programme can become only electoral: identify supporters, record information and mobilise them on election day.

That would undersell its political potential. Block leaders must continue to lead their blocks beyond the 4 November 2026.

The fundamental question is not simply who will vote ANC?

It is what is shaping political consciousness in this community?

- Why are some people disengaged from politics?
- Why are young people increasingly sceptical of established organisations?
- What material conditions produce frustration?
- How does unemployment affect households?
- How does apartheid's spatial legacy continue to shape access to opportunities?



- How do communities experience the state?

These questions require more than electoral intelligence. They require political organisation.

The Block Leader should therefore be developed as an organiser capable of connecting immediate community concerns to the broader political programme of the movement.

That is where the strategy acquires a genuinely transformative character.

Rebuilding a mass movement

The ANC's historic strength came from its capacity to organise people around political demands and connect everyday struggles to a broader programme of liberation.

That relationship cannot be sustained through historical legitimacy alone.

Each generation encounters different material conditions and develops its own political experiences. A movement that wants to remain relevant must engage those experiences rather than assume that yesterday's political loyalties will automatically reproduce themselves.

This requires turning membership into activity.

A member should not simply appear on an organisational membership database. They should have a political role.

The Block Leader provides one such role: a defined area, a defined responsibility and a direct relationship with residents. This gives practical meaning to the



principle of going back to basics.

Local government and popular accountability

The connection between Block Leaders and local government is particularly important.

A community experiencing repeated electricity interruptions, water shortages, poor refuse collection or deteriorating infrastructure should not have to wait for an election before its concerns reach the ANC.

The Block Leader can provide an organised channel through which community experiences are documented, communicated and followed up.

This also creates an important accountability relationship.

The ANC must be able to explain what government is doing, where implementation is failing and what corrective action is required.

Political credibility cannot be built by denying problems.

It is strengthened when an organisation demonstrates that it understands them and is prepared to confront them.

For this reason, the Block Leader should not function as a defender of every government decision. Their responsibility is to strengthen the political relationship between the organisation, government and the community.

No area can be abandoned

A differentiated electoral strategy is necessary. Where the ANC has substantial support, the organisation must consolidate it. Where the contest is competitive, political work must intensify. Where support has weakened, the ANC must understand the causes and rebuild its relationship with residents.

This is not about pretending that all areas have identical political conditions. It is about refusing to allow difficult electoral terrain to become organisationally abandoned territory.

The National Democratic Revolution cannot be pursued selectively.

The working class and poor are dispersed across different communities and electoral landscapes. Organisation must therefore follow the people, not merely the areas in which electoral returns are favourable.

The election cannot be the beginning

The Joburg strategy identifies a concentrated mobilisation period until 4 November 2026. Such an intensive operation can only succeed if the groundwork has already been done. The final campaign cannot manufacture relationships that should have been built months earlier.

By the time the Mayihlome phase begins, Block Leaders should already understand their areas, know the major community concerns, have established relationships and be connected to the broader campaign structure.

The final mobilisation should therefore be the expression of an existing organisation, rather than an emergency attempt to create one.

From volunteerism to cadre development

This changes the meaning of volunteering. An ANC volunteer should not be viewed simply as additional manpower for an election campaign. The volunteer is a potential political organiser.

Taking responsibility for a block

means assuming responsibility for a piece of the organisation's relationship with society. That requires political education, discipline, reporting, listening and the ability to connect local problems to broader political objectives.

The task is therefore to move from volunteers who participate in campaigns to organisers who build political organisation.

This is a more sustainable foundation for renewal.

Rebuilding from below

The ANC's organisational renewal will ultimately be measured not by the size of its election machinery but by the quality of its relationship with society.

A movement committed to the National Democratic Revolution must remain rooted in the material struggles of the people. That requires strong branches, politically conscious members, accountable public representatives, capable local government and sustained community organisation.

The Block Leader Strategy provides a practical starting point

because it brings political responsibility to the smallest meaningful unit of everyday community life.

The challenge is therefore straightforward:

- Know the block.
- Understand its material conditions.
- Organise its people.
- Connect their concerns to the political programme.
- And feed their experiences back into the movement.

If the ANC is to arrest its organisational and electoral decline, it must rebuild the capacity to organise society from below.

Not only at rallies. Not only during elections. But in the ordinary places where political consciousness is formed in streets, homes, workplaces and communities.

The National Democratic Revolution cannot remain an idea discussed at organisational meetings. It must acquire organisational expression in the daily lives of the people.

The road to renewal begins at the block.



COMRADES, FIX THE BRANCH. THE ROOF CANNOT RESCUE A CRACKED FOUNDATION

■ By **STAN ITSHEGETSENG**

GOGO DLAMINI joins the ANC because she wants her community to improve. Mkhulu Dube attends a branch meeting because he believes his voice must count. Neither arrives looking for a lesson in factional arithmetic. They want an organisation that listens, chooses capable leaders and gets on with the work. Then the meeting fails to quorate. Somebody's membership is missing. Somebody else disputes the nomination. The next meeting collapses into arguments. Weeks pass, the dispute travels upwards, and suddenly the organisation is racing against an electoral deadline.

By the time the alarm rings at Luthuli House, the trouble may have been travelling for months. Eish, bafwethu, we cannot keep discovering the fire only when the

roof starts falling.

That is the starting point of my critique of Chief Rev. Dr JV Fatushe's proposed *ANC Electoral and Organisational Crisis Prevention, Accountability and Continuity Guide*, abbreviated as ECPACG. Its recommendations on verification, escalation, submission records and accountability have value. The insistence that critical responsibilities must not depend on one individual or an assumption deserves support. But its submission controls need a deeper examination of the political and institutional weaknesses that can leave candidate lists unfinished in the first place. A reliable upload cannot rescue a list still trapped in unresolved contestation.

My argument is that nomination disputes can delay finalisation

and compress the time available for submission. Their precise contribution to the recent failure must be established through the records. We cannot convict the Secretary General by microphone, nor issue revolutionary certificates of innocence to every structure below. Accountability must follow the evidence from the branch, through the zone and region, to provincial and national structures.

Who convened the meeting? Who verified membership? Who handled the dispute? Who changed the names, under whose authority, and when did the final information arrive? Only then can we establish who failed to act, who lacked capacity and who may have obstructed the process. Otherwise, we appoint another committee to supervise another alarm while the same institutional



weaknesses continue doing their damage.

The ANC is a broad church. Workers, professionals, businesspeople, unemployed people, traditional constituencies and religious communities seek expression within it. They may agree that society must change while disagreeing over its direction, beneficiaries and leadership. That diversity gives the movement reach, but it also makes leadership contests struggles over influence, recognition and expectations of opportunity.

For some, leadership is a commitment to serve. For others, it becomes an escape from social invisibility. Yesterday nobody answered your telephone call. Today you are “*Chairperson*”, and suddenly everybody remembers your surname. Where livelihoods are insecure, losing a nomination can feel like losing one’s future. This helps explain the intensity. It excuses none of the intimidation, bribery or manipulation that may follow.

Members have a right to support candidates and organise around ideas. The danger begins when loyalty to the grouping becomes stronger than loyalty to the organisation. Then yesterday’s brother becomes today’s obstacle. Disagreement becomes betrayal, and the movement starts chewing its own limbs while singing about unity. Sharp sharp, comrades, a slate cannot become more sacred than the movement it claims to serve.

People’s spiritual beliefs can become entangled in this anxiety. Some seek prayer and religious blessing. Others consult izinyanga or turn to practices involving impepho and intelezi. Others place their confidence in wealthy



patrons. These can express desperation to secure an uncertain outcome, but they are not equivalent forms of misconduct. Personal faith and cultural practice do not, in themselves, corrupt an election. Bribery, threats and coercion interfere directly with other people’s freedom. We must investigate conduct and evidence rather than turn allegations about supernatural powers into organisational findings.

Money deserves particular attention because it can carry inequality from society directly into the branch. Expensive transport, hospitality and campaign publicity give well resourced aspirants advantages unavailable to equally capable members without money. Legitimate assistance must be distinguished from inducements. Otherwise, the ballot remains secret while the contest surrounding it becomes an auction.

None of this is unique to the ANC. Traditional succession, churches, businesses and community organisations can also become battlefields over authority and resources. Biblical narratives and historical dramas remind us that ambition is old. Their value is illustrative: a television account of Ertuğrul cannot establish the historical causes of state formation.

Our immediate task is to understand the institutions we can actually repair.

The branch is where that work must begin.

Sometimes the weakness starts with the election of the secretary. A comrade is chosen because he or she is available, obedient and willing to carry the donkey work. The secretary chases membership records, prepares notices and organises meetings. His Majesty arrives for the microphone and photograph. When the process collapses, the person carrying the paperwork suddenly carries the blame as well.

Sometimes the missing ingredient is political maturity. A person may type excellent minutes yet lack the judgement, confidence or organisational understanding required. Others have potential but receive neither training nor support. We must distinguish those who need development from those selected precisely because they can be controlled. A capable secretary must be able to tell even a powerful chairperson: “*Comrade, that instruction does not comply with our rules.*”

The office serves the branch and the organisation. It must never

become the emperor's errands desk. Duties must be shared, skills developed and accountability attached to actual authority. Choosing somebody for obedience and then expressing shock when the branch is manipulated through them is political hypocrisy with its shoes polished.

These are constitutional questions as well as organisational ones. Section 19(1)(b) of the Constitution protects citizens' participation in political party activities. In *Ramakatsa and Others v Magashule and Others* [2012] ZACC 31, ANC members challenged the Free State provincial conference following irregularities in preceding branch processes. The Constitutional Court affirmed the importance of lawful internal organisation and declared the conference and its decisions unlawful and invalid.

For gogo Dlamini and mkhulu Dube, the lesson is straightforward: if the process selecting their representatives is defective, the leadership elected through it can also fall. Branch meetings and delegate selection are substantive democratic work. You cannot repair a crooked foundation by hanging a beautiful chandelier upstairs.

The warning appeared again in *Dube and Others v Zikalala and Others* [2017] ZAKZPHC 36, where the High Court declared the ANC's November 2015 Kwa-Zulu Natal provincial elective conference and its decisions unlawful and invalid. A victorious slate and thunderous applause did not cure the legal defects. Amandla does not perform that kind of courtroom magic, majita.

Tlokwe adds another lesson. In *Kham and Others v Electoral*

Commission and Another [2015] ZACC 37, candidates challenged municipal by elections involving problems with voter registration and electoral records. The Constitutional Court found that seven by elections were not free and fair, set aside their outcomes and ordered fresh elections. It also required sufficient address information to establish that voters were ordinarily resident in the correct voting district.

Before trusting the result, we must be able to trust who was entitled to participate. Tlokwe concerned public elections administered by the IEC, rather than ANC membership rules. The comparison is nevertheless important: accurate records and meaningful verification protect electoral credibility. A branch must know who belongs, who qualifies to vote and whether its attendance record is genuine.

Tlokwe also shows that the IEC is subject to scrutiny. The ANC must comply with electoral law, and the Commission must fulfil its duties. Each institution answers for its own conduct. One institution's failure cannot automatically become another's excuse.

Membership administration therefore requires urgent attention. Rule 4 of the ANC Consti-

tution provides for applications, provisional membership and admission to full membership. I find no general annual joining season in those provisions. Where applicants are told membership is closed, the authority, purpose and duration of that restriction should be identified.

A published cut off date establishing who may vote in a particular meeting serves a different purpose. The ANC's BGM guidelines recognise that function. Such a date must not casually become a prohibition on receiving applications or welcoming people into organisational activity.

The movement should recruit, process applications and educate people throughout the year. Membership cannot become a tap opened when our grouping needs numbers and closed when another grouping's supporters arrive. Nee man, the ANC is not a private spaza where the owner changes the opening hours after recognising the customer.

Recruitment must lead to induction. From my own observation, I doubt that even one in ten branches consistently conducts proper induction. That is my assessment, not a national audit finding. The organisation must



establish the actual position. But the concern is serious: too often the first lesson offered to a recruit is whom to support. The movement's history, Constitution and public purpose must wait.

Members learn the slate before learning the organisation. We recruit voting numbers and then wonder why independent thought is scarce.

I experienced factional suspicion when I chaired my branch, during the leadership contestation involving Cde Zuma and Cde Kgalema. We had arranged a gala dinner and intended to award certificates to comrades who had completed our leadership programme. The proposal to invite a leader to deliver a lecture became contested in the BEC. We eventually brought Cde Losi from COSATU as a compromise speaker.

Even education had to negotiate a factional border post. Before a speaker opens their mouth, comrades have inspected their political passport. Legitimate scrutiny should examine educational value and organisational purpose. When the overriding question becomes *"whose person is this?"*, political education is being held hostage.

The problem has not remained in the past. I have seen communication from current regional leadership requiring branches to obtain authorisation for lecture speakers. This raises a fundamental question: how much room does the branch retain to develop its members if somebody elsewhere must first approve who may address them?

The ANC Constitution gives branches a role in democratic discussion and policy formulation, protects the circulation of ideas, and also provides for regional supervision. Those provisions must be read together. Coordination can be legitimate; the actual approval requirement must be examined for its authority, criteria and application.

But where approval becomes a means of excluding inconvenient voices, supervision is being converted into political gatekeeping. Authoritarian habits do not always arrive with drums and marching boots. Sometimes they arrive quietly in a circular. Permission gradually replaces initiative, silence passes for discipline, and the branch becomes a waiting room for instructions.

Between the branch and the region sits the zone. We must ex-

amine that layer too, particularly where it exercises powers said to have been delegated by regional leadership. Such delegations should identify their authority, scope and limits. "We were instructed from above" cannot become a constitutional blank cheque.

Rule 23.11 provides for constituent branch executives to elect zonal committees every two years. Rule 23.14 assigns coordination, reporting, implementation and liaison responsibilities.

The Johannesburg Zonal Task Team arrangements I am questioning must therefore be examined against that framework. Are temporary appointments restoring elected structures, or becoming their substitute? The appointing resolutions, mandates and timetable for elections should be disclosed. A task team's existence alone does not settle its legality. Equally, the label *"task team"* cannot answer every question in its favour.

Comrades who see these arrangements as throttling branch initiative deserve answers. Their concern is that appointed intermediaries may create space for leadership aligned groupings while narrowing the room available to independent voices. That concern must be tested through appointments and actual decisions. Factional purpose requires evidence, but it cannot be dismissed with another speech about unity.

A zone should help branches organise, educate and serve. Where it becomes a checkpoint for acceptable opinions, coordination risks becoming control. You cannot keep cutting the roots and complain that the tree has



stopped bearing fruit. Any temporary structure must explain what it is repairing, how its work is assessed and when the prescribed electoral opportunity will return.

Then, when branches weaken and disputes multiply, accountability must examine the entire chain. What did the BEC neglect? What did the zone facilitate or obstruct? What did regional leadership supervise or impose? We cannot throttle initiative below and send every consequence upstairs with the Secretary General's name already written on the envelope.

Fixing the branch includes examining those supervising it.

The same applies to meetings that repeatedly fail to quorate. A quorum does not descend from heaven because somebody shouts "*comrades*" into a loud-hailer. It grows from an active membership receiving proper notice, knowing its status and seeing a reason to participate. Correct records early, make venues accessible, prepare convenors and resolve disputes promptly.

The Constitution already prescribes regular branch and BEC meetings, reporting and quorum requirements. We have obligations on paper; consistent implementation is the challenge.

Every branch needs a practical programme, allocated tasks and evidence of community work. Minutes alone cannot demonstrate political life. A branch that wakes up mainly when delegates are required has become a conference depot. The community deserves a living organisation.

Persistent inactivity and unexplained absenteeism must have



consequences. Genuine capacity problems require support. Repeated neglect or deliberate obstruction requires fair proceedings. Hearing the other side, the principle lawyers call *audi alteram partem*, should not suddenly become fashionable only when the disciplinary letter reaches our own WhatsApp.

Discipline also concerns how we behave. I have seen members attend meetings carrying quart bottles, drinking openly and hurling insults. When intoxication and shouting take over, whose judgement are we recording in the minutes? What revolutionary programme are we developing when the quart appears to have more authority than the chairperson?

As a parent, I want my children to find mentors, political education and meaningful work in the ANC. What confidence can I have if the environment normalises excessive drinking and humiliation? Residents see this behaviour. Young people notice whose contribution gets heard. The logo on the shirt cannot clean up the conduct of the person wearing it.

The ANC's disciplinary provisions identify disorderly conduct and

disruption as misconduct. Leadership must enforce those standards consistently.

Meeting rules should prohibit drinking during proceedings and attendance in a condition that prevents orderly participation. Serious incidents must be addressed. Repeated or grave misconduct should attract proportionate sanctions under the rules, including removal from office or expulsion where justified. Members experiencing alcohol dependency deserve support, alongside accountability for harmful behaviour.

Former President Thabo Mbeki's emphasis on membership quality speaks to this concern. In September 2024, he called for a membership audit and invoked "*better fewer but better*". I agree that numbers cannot substitute for integrity and commitment.

"Better" must mean members who serve, learn and respect others. It must never become code for wealthy, academically privileged or factionally obedient.

The problem follows us to rallies. From what I have witnessed, substantial numbers sometimes

remain outside, socialising and drinking while the political address proceeds inside. At coastal venues, the beach can appear busier than the venue and its overflow combined. The President outlines the movement's tasks while comrades outline their footprints in the sand.

Kanti, did we mobilise for the January 8 message or arrange a seaside excursion?

There is nothing wrong with enjoying the coast. But recreation cannot displace the purpose for which organisational resources were committed. A full bus does not establish political participation. We cannot keep paying the organisational price of mobilisation and receiving holiday photographs as the political return.

Heat, queues and poor facilities are genuine problems. Provide shade, water, toilets and adequate sound. Use sheltered listening areas and tents, as I recall seeing in Cape Town. Prepare members before departure and discuss the message afterwards, translating it into branch tasks. Otherwise, we count passengers while losing purpose. That is self cannibalisation.

Our constant cycle of leadership contests also deserves review. I propose common five year internal terms, with elections sequenced from branches upwards within a defined period. Changing the present differing cycles requires proper constitutional reform.

The purpose is to create time for implementation. We cannot spend one year calculating who controls which branch and the next explaining why the community programme never left the printer. Longer terms must carry annu-

al accountability, regular reviews and effective remedies for failure. Democracy must continue between elections. Stability should give committed leadership time to work; it must not give sleeping leadership a longer mattress.

I also support examining a common election date for municipal, provincial and national government. This could reduce repeated mobilisation and may ease voter fatigue. Increased turnout remains a possible benefit requiring evidence, because distrust will survive a change of calendar.

Sections 49, 108 and 159 of the Constitution govern terms and elections in these spheres. Alignment needs a lawful transition, alongside careful planning for ballots, logistics and the visibility of local issues. Existing terms cannot simply be extended beyond constitutional limits to make the arithmetic convenient.

Zones and other intermediate structures should also demonstrate their practical value. Where they meet a genuine organisational need, strengthen them. Where they duplicate work or become checkpoints for negotiating political importance, restructure them through the proper process. More positions do not automatically give ordinary members a stronger voice.

Leadership competence must improve without creating an academic aristocracy. Councillors need the capacity to understand budgets, question reports and exercise oversight. Yet certificates alone establish neither honesty nor public commitment. The published ANC selection rules recognise capacity and experience alongside education and permit exceptional matric waivers. The question is whether these routes work fairly in practice.

Training and practical assessment must make competence accessible. A movement rooted among working people cannot expect them to supply votes while reserving leadership opportunities for others. Raise the bar, yes. Build steps people can climb. Otherwise, exclusion may provoke resistance to the reform or encourage members to seek political space elsewhere.

Does democracy itself cause these troubles? It gives ambition a visible arena, but restricting participation can simply move rivalry behind closed doors. East Asian development offers lessons about education, capable institutions and economic policy. It does not prove that limiting democracy is the essential ingredient of progress.

America's experience with Donald



Trump similarly raises questions about political judgement, identity and public trust. Criticising his conduct requires no psychiatric diagnosis. Nor can money alone explain his victory: official 2024 figures show higher receipts for the Harris campaign, including preceding Biden committee activity, than for Trump's authorised campaign. Those figures exclude the full outside spending ecosystem, but they caution against a single explanation.

A modest comparison with the SACP is useful. Its democratic centralism binds lower structures to higher decisions while requiring higher structures to account to members and preserving avenues for internal debate. The lesson is disciplined implementation joined to meaningful accountability. Ideological agreement cannot eliminate personal ambition.

Our task is to make democracy work with discipline, competence and fairness.

Fatuse's ECPACG would become stronger by connecting its submission controls to these institutional realities. For municipal nominations, the Local Government: Municipal Electoral Act 27 of 2000 and applicable IEC requirements must feature expressly. Internal disagreement does not suspend the external timetable.

Begin with active branches and reliable records. Protect lawful participation. Develop competent officials. Resolve disputes early. Make candidate decisions transparent. Then independently verify submission. Accountability must distinguish honest error, inadequate resources, negligence and deliberate interference, following evidence through every

responsible structure.

Comrades, we cannot treat the Constitution like an umbrella borrowed only when rain falls on our own heads. It must protect the member whose slate loses as firmly as the member whose slate wins. Gogo Dlamini and mkhulu Dube should enter a branch meeting, understand its business, contribute without intimidation and trust that the rules apply equally.

The branch is not a tenant in somebody's factional property. No emperor inherited the ANC.

Fix the branch first. Give members knowledge, officials competence and democracy room to breathe.

The revolution cannot spend its life campaigning for the next chairperson while the people wait for the purpose of the previous election to arrive.

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 was a vital part of South African history.”

EVENT

POSTPONED

RECOGNITION OF THE GRAVESITE AT THE LIBERATION OF THE MOVEMENT

INITIATIVES

SAUL MSANE FOUNDATION
PRESERVING HERITAGE • ACTIVATING CULTURE • LAND JUSTICE

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

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

3–9 October 2026

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

3 October 1948

Leaders call for African Unity



Twelve African leaders, mainly from the African National Congress (ANC), issued a Call for African Unity. These leaders included IB Tabata, Professor Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu, Dr. Alfred Bitini, Dr AB Xuma, ZR Mahabane, RV. Selope Thema, Dr. James S. Moroka, ZK Matthews, AWG Champion, Paul Mosaka, RH Godlo, RG Baloyi, RT Bokwe, and LK Ntlabati. They were protesting against apartheid and its dangers to African education, freedom of movement, land and residential rights, and employment opportunities. The call laid the basis for the convening of the All African Convention in December that year.

4 October 1922

Wits University Inaugurated

The inauguration of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (Wits) was celebrated a few months after the Univer-



sity College, Johannesburg was granted full university status on 1 March 1922. Prince Arthur of Connaught, governor-general of the Union of South Africa, became the University's first chancellor, and Professor Jan H. Hofmeyr its first principal. Building began at Milner Park on a site donated to the University by the Johannesburg municipality. Wits therefore celebrates its centenary this year.

4 October 1929

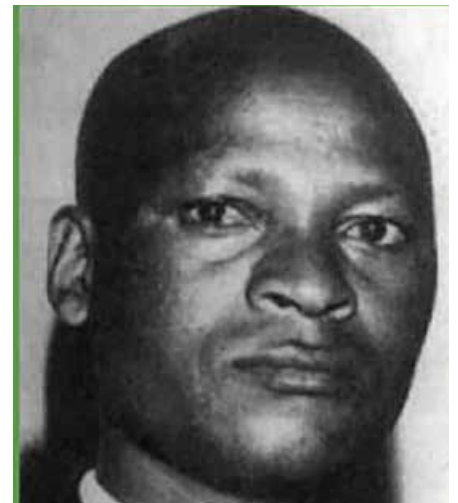
Table Mountain Cable Car Inaugurated

On 4 October 1929 the Table Mountain cableway, one of the world's biggest tourist attractions in Cape Town, was inaugurated by then Mayor of Cape Town, Rev. A. J. S. Lewis. By the 1870s many Cape Town citizens had suggested the introduction of a railway line to the top of Table Mountain but plans to implement a proposed rack railway were delayed by the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war. A Norwegian engineer, Trygve Stromsoe, proposed

the building of a cableway. Within two years, at a cost of £60 000, the cableway was complete. The car could ascend the mountain in under 10 minutes and carried 19 passengers and a conductor.

4 October 1974

Oliver Kgadime Matsepe, writer and poet dies in Groblersdal



Oliver Kgadime (Phukubjane) Matsepe is a novelist and poet who was twice awarded the S.E. Mqhayi Prize by the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns (South African Academy for Arts and Science). He was born in the Groblersdal District on 22 March 1932. He received his education in various mission schools in Northern Transvaal (now Limpopo) and was ultimately baptized in the Lutheran church. For most of his adult life, Matsepe worked as a clerk and interpreter for the Department of Bantu Administration and Development. A devout Christian, his

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

religious beliefs were reflected in his books. Matsepe died on 4 October 1974. In the two years prior to his death, he had produced 5 novels and 4 volumes of poetry, including *Megokgo ya Bjoko* (1968), published in English as *Tears of the Brain* (2018).

5 October 1946

Poet Mafika Gwala born



Mafika Pascal Gwala, South African poet and editor writing in English and isiZulu was born on 5 October 1946 in Verulam, KwaZulu-Natal. He matriculated in Inkamana High School. He spent his adult life in Mpumalanga, working as a factory clerk. Gwala went on to study at the University of Natal (now UKZN) and obtained his MPhil in Politics. He started poetry in his early twenties, publishing poems, essays and short stories in local and international journals, including working as the editor of *The Black Review* journal. He was also an activist dating back to the 1960s, as a member of SASO and involved in various community projects in Durban. Apart from writing, he was a high school teacher and guest university lecturer. Gwala authored two volumes of '*Jol'iiinkomo*', (*Bringing the cattle home*) which was later performed by Miriam Makeba. One of his best known poems was "*The Children of Nonti*" published in 1977. He passed away on 7 Sep-

tember 2014. Gwala influenced a number of contemporary poets in South Africa.

5 October 1960

SA referendum on whether to become a republic

The South African government led by National Party (NP) held a referendum in which white voters decided whether South Africa should remain a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations or declare a republic. The voting age restriction was lowered to eighteen years and included the white voters in South West Africa (now Namibia). The two former Boer republics, Transvaal and Orange Free State (now Free State), and South West Africa, voted in favour, while the Cape Province, though also in favour, had a smaller majority. Natal (now KwaZulu Natal), which was inhabited by more English-speaking whites than Afrikaners, voted against it. The result was 52 per cent in favour of a republic.

5 October 1966

SA Military History Society established

The South African Military History Society (SAMHS) was formed following an appeal by Commandant-General H.B. Klopper to develop interest in South Africa's military history. The society was to help to further interests of students of military history and the collection of military items of historical importance. It encouraged research into the history, traditions, uniforms, badges and other historical aspects of the armed forces of Southern Africa and, to a lesser extent, those of other countries.

5 October 1986

Queenstown UDF leader Mbuyiseli Songelwa died in detention

On October 1986, Mr Mbuyiseli

Songelwa, a Queenstown community and United Democratic Front leader died in police custody. He was awaiting trial on subversion charges at Fort Glarmorgan Prison in East London. According to police reports, he died of asthma on his way to the hospital. Mr Songelwa had suffered the asthma attack on the Friday, but had only received medical assistance on the Saturday.

6 October 1899

Anglo Boer Long March by Black Mineworkers

With the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War imminent, thousands of Black men and women were left stranded in Johannesburg. Mine owners closed mines and paid off miners, but the mine-owners did not repatriate the miners. Thousands of miners were forced out of mine property and had to leave the safety of the mine compounds. Their prospects were very bleak. They faced the real possibility of being arrested for vagrancy, or being shot at by Boer commandos. Though trains were readily available to transport refugees to Natal and many Black mineworkers could afford to pay the required train fares, they were not given passage. As a result, more than 7 000 Zulu mineworkers, escorted by Mr J.J. Marwick, representative of the Natal Native Affairs Department and six



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Republican policemen, left Johannesburg on their way home to Natal and Zululand, walking about 56 kilometres per day, with the exception of some seventy men and fifty women and children who were too ill to continue the march and who boarded trains at Heidelberg station. The march is fictionalised in a book by Fred Khumalo, *The Long March* (2019).

6 October 1902

Cape Town-Beira Railway line completed

On 6 October 1902 the 3200 km long railway line between Cape Town and Beira in Mozambique was completed. The construction of the Beira Railway to Umtali was completed in February 1889, just before the South African War (Anglo-Boer War II, 1899-1902). On 16 February 1898, the first regular freight service began.

6 October 1999

Agriculture South Africa changes its name to AgriSA

The SA Agricultural Union restructured and changed its name on the union's annual meeting in Rustenburg to Agri South Africa. Agriculture SA was formed in 1904 as a whites-only agricultural association, to promote the interests of its constituent members. AgriSA today consists of nine provincial and 26 commodity organisations as well as 44 corporate members.

6 October 2006

Mbuzini Samora Machel Public Library Opens

On 6 October 2006, the Minister of Arts and Culture, Pallo Jordan, opened a community library at Mbuzini in the Mpumalanga Province, known as the Mbuzini Samora Machel Public Library. This library was opened to com-



memorate the 20th anniversary of the death of Samora Machel. On 19 October 1986, an air plane carrying the Mozambican president, his staff and other prominent politicians crashed at Mbuzini, killing all in the plane.

7 October 1931

Archbishop Mpilo Desmond Tutu born

Archbishop Mpilo Desmond Tutu was born on this day in Klerksdorp, Transvaal. An anti-apartheid activists, he was former secretary of the South African Council of Churches, Nobel Peace Prize winner and first black Archbishop of Anglican Church in South Africa. The Arch Tutu is best known for his role as chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). He passed away on 26 December 2021.

7 October 2004

14 year old convicted of murder

The South African Broadcasting Cooperation (SABC) reported that a fourteen year old girl was found guilty in the Pietermaritzburg High Court of murdering Radha Govender, a Pietermaritzburg socialite in 2002. The girl was only 12 years old when she carried out the murder. She was also found guilty on charges of theft. After drugging her victim, she approached two men, Sipho Hadebe and Vusi Tshabalala,

and asked them to kill Govender. They were given some items such as clothes, jewelry, a video machine and a decoder she stole from the house as their payments. She became the youngest girl ever to be convicted of murder in SA.

8 October 1934

Former ANC leader and minister Prof Kader Asmal born



Kader Asmal, political activist, human rights lawyer, former Minister of Education (1999-2004) and of Water Affairs and Forestry (1994-1999); is born in Stanger, Natal (now Kwa-Dukuza). His resistance against apartheid began in 1952 when he organized a school boycott in his area in support of the Defiance Campaign. Asmal continued to be active in the resistance movement as a member of the ANC for the rest of the 1950s. Early in the 1960s, following the banning of the ANC, PAC and SACP, Asmal went into exile. He spent most of his time in exile based in Ireland, where he was active in the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM). On his return to the country he continued to be active in the ANC, becoming a prominent member of the ANC cabinet and considered the Party's think tank and intellectual. Prof Asmal passed on in June 2011.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

8 October 1999

Tanzanian suspect in US Embassy bombings denied charges

The 26-year-old Tanzanian, Khalfan Khamis Mohamed, a prime suspect in the bombing of two United States of American embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in 1998, pleaded not guilty to charges pressed against him in New York. Mohamed was traced to Cape Town, South Africa, by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and extradited to the USA to stand trial. He was charged along with sixteen others, including Saudi exile Usama bin Laden, for allegedly planning attacks on Americans overseas and embassy bombings. Mohamed was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole in 2001, and serving his sentence in the US. He attempted an escape from prison in 2000 and in 2014 successfully sued the US government for preventing him from communicating with anyone but his immediate family.

9 October 1962

Uganda gains Independence



The East African country Uganda gained independence from Great Britain as a parliamentary democratic monarchy with traditional kingdoms Ankole, Buganda, Bunyoro and Toro receiving federal

status and a degree of autonomy. Buganda, under the leadership of Sir Edward Mutesa, was the most powerful kingdom. Milton Obote, the leader of the socialist Uganda People's Congress (UPC) became the first prime minister of the newly independent Uganda. In 1963, Uganda became the Republic of Uganda, with Mutesa II as first (largely ceremonial) president.

9 October 1953

Reservation of Separate Amenities Act starts



The Nationalist Party (NP) government developed the concept of allocation of resources such as general infrastructure, education and jobs and formalised this into law. The Amenities Act provided that there should be separate amenities such as toilets, parks and beaches for different racial groups. Subsequently, apartheid signs indicating which people were permitted to enter/use the facilities, were displayed throughout

the country. The standard of amenities for non-Whites were generally lower than those for Whites.

9 October 1963

Rivonia Trialists charged

Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Rusty Bernstein, Dennis Goldberg, James Kantor, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoaledi and Raymond Mhlaba (The Rivonia Trialist) are charged with sabotage and attempting to overthrow the state violently.

9 October 1964

UN Special Committee on Apartheid calls for stay of execution for Vuyisile Mini and others

The United Nations Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid, at the special meeting, urgently demands that South Africa refrain from executing three leaders of the ANC, sentenced to death in March 1964. The appeals of the three – Vuyisile Mini (44), Wilson Khayinga and Zinakhile Mraba – against their sentences had been rejected by the Supreme Court. Despite local and international appeals, including by President Nasser of Egypt who at the time chaired the Non-Aligned Movement, Mini and colleagues were executed on 6 November 1964 and buried in secret by the apartheid regime.



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

3–9 October 2026

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


OCTOBER O.R. TAMBO MONTH

OLIVER REGINALD TAMBO

BORN 27 OCTOBER 1917

LONGEST SERVING PRESIDENT OF THE ANC

FOUNDER MEMBER

AND FIRST NATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE ANCYL

A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL

VOTE ANC



4 October

World Animal Welfare Day

We share our planet with many other species, including plants and animals, but often care only about human well-being. We cut down forests, pollute rivers and the oceans, take up space for our homes, agriculture, mines and cities and displace animals; we illegally hunt and kill animals, taking away resources and habitats from animals and plants. Many animal species are disappearing completely, because of the activities of human beings. With human created global warming, we also impact on the habitats of animals.

5 October

World Teachers Day

The day celebrates the adoption of the ILO/UNESCO recommendations concerning the status of teachers, setting benchmarks regarding the rights and responsibilities of teachers and standards for their initial preparation and further education, recruitment, employment, and teaching and learning conditions. As populations grow and lifelong learn-

ing becomes the norm, the number of teachers (from pre-primary to vocational and higher education) grow exponentially. In 1993, there were just over 55 million teachers in the world across the different spheres of education. Today, this number is over 80 million and growing. Across the world, male teachers are under-represented in preschool and primary education, and over-represented in tertiary education. The 2026 World Teachers'



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Day will mark the 60th anniversary of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers under the theme ***“Standing with teachers: 60 years of protecting the profession, advancing its status and shaping our futures”***. The event will celebrate progress in recognizing teachers’ vital role, highlight the challenges the profession continues to face, and call on society and policymakers to protect, promote and elevate its status.

5 October World Habitat Day

This global day, designated the first Monday in October, focuses on the state of cities and towns, and the right to adequate and safe shelter. It also reminds the world that we all have the power and the responsibility to shape the future of our cities and towns. In 2026, World Habitat Day will be marked under the theme ***“Adequate Housing for All.”*** Since 1994, almost 5 million housing units have been delivered by the ANC-led government, benefiting more than 20 million South Africans. Today, 1,887 housing projects across 174 municipalities represent a further R160.93 billion investment in human settlements. Alongside building homes, the work continues to strengthen tenure security through the registration and delivery of title deeds, giving families the dignity and security of ownership.



5-9 October National Marine Week

National Marine Week is celebrated every year during the second week of October. Its purpose is to create awareness on the marine and coastal environment, the promotion of sustainable use and conservation of these resources, for the benefit of all both present and future generations. South Africa is nestled between the warm Agulhas Current on its east coast with rich ocean biodiversity, but not large fish stocks and the cold Benguela system on its west coast that supports large fisheries

such as anchovy, sardine and hake stocks. These currents are key drivers of South Africa’s climate and rainfall conditions. To ensure the health of our oceans, we can reduce plastic consumption, make informed seafood choices, don’t dump chemicals in rivers and beaches, choose green detergents or make your own, keep beaches clean, and fill your yard with indigenous species.

7 October Global Day for Decent Work

The four pillars of decent work as per the ILO are: full and productive employment; rights at work; social protection; and promotion of social dialogue. Yes, millions of people, majority young people and women work in precarious situation, for low-low wages and without protection or benefits.

7 October World Smile Day

World Smile Day devotes a day to smiles and spreading kindness. Bring your smile and use the smile emoji! The yellow smiley icon was born in 1963 in Worcester, Massachusetts, when the graphic designer Harvey Ball was approached to create a morale booster for employees. Smiling not only offers a mood boost but helps our bodies release cortisol and endorphins that provide numerous health benefits, including: reduced blood pressure, increased endurance and reduced pain.

9 October World Post Day

World Post Day is celebrated each year on 9 October. The event was declared by the 1969 Universal Postal Congress in Tokyo as a means to mark the anniversary of the Universal Postal Union’s (UPU) formed in 1874. The purpose of World Post Day is to bring awareness to the Post’s role in the everyday lives of people and businesses, as well as its contribution to global social and economic development. Postal services are facing seismic changes, due to the replacement of ‘snail mail’ with e-mail and other forms of messaging, as well as the entrance of private courier services, as e-commerce grows.



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