

Historic conference decision opens Inkatha's doors to all races

"The time has now come to join together to establish the new South Africa"

Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi's keynote speech to the Annual General Conference marked a turning point in Inkatha's political life. The Conference was regarded as one of the most important developments in shaping the political character of the new South Africa. And in a moving address – which cut across barriers of race and creed – Dr Buthelezi appealed to all South Africans who sought a new race-free democracy to join hands with the New Inkatha.

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Spelling out the challenges facing the new Inkatha, Dr Buthelezi listed the FOUR GREAT TASKS (see page 6) which lay ahead. He said the next six months would see Inkatha growing in strength and taking on a vital new look as a political party. During this time, new Inkatha branches should be established, structurally-based on the political constituencies which had been de-limited for Parliamentary elections. There would also need to be a close look at the kind of constitution the new Inkatha would have.

"There is hard work ahead for Inkatha's Black, White, Indian and Coloured members. We must get together to shape the new Inkatha in which we can remain together.

"The new Inkatha must also commence on a wide-ranging endeavour to be pro-active in establishing dialogue between ourselves and other political parties. The more we talk to each other now, the better we will be able to negotiate with each other later. We must talk for friendship. We must talk for co-operation. And if necessary, we must talk for alliances. But talk we must. Communicate we must. We must go out to establish relationships."

Dr Buthelezi said Inkatha was totally committed to the struggle for a multi-party democracy in South Africa. "We will just not allow the ANC and its South African Communist Party partner to crush all opposition to it and emerge as the only viable political party. There will be a multi-party democracy because we will ensure that South Africans do have a multiple choice in politics.

"A new South Africa will not be made stable, democratic and prosperous by one single party. There is no party representative enough, wise enough and experienced enough for us even to think of entrusting the future of South Africa to it and it alone. It is when politics is free to gather the wisdom of all parties in a multi-party democracy and it is when all parties pool their wisdom in a common political system, that we will be able to look to the future with confidence."

On the question of Inkatha's role in

The KwaZulu Chief Minister and President of the Inkatha Freedom Party said he had yearned for the day on which Inkatha's doors would be thrown open for all, "because history has presented us with the demand that we now all move together to establish a new South Africa."

He pledged: "We will be there as reliable partners in the pursuit of South Africa's common good. We will be there when the going gets tough and we will be there to laugh, sing and dance with Whites, Indians and Coloureds who will be with us to share the victory.

"Inkatha is very aware that there will be no end to strife in this country until the majoritarian principle is given rein to settle South Africa politically. But we in Inkatha are also very aware that White fear in particular is very real and needs to be dealt with.

"We ask Whites, Indians and Coloureds to join with Inkatha's existing membership in dealing with fear. Let us together not only make the future safe, but let us together present it as safe for those who are apprehensive."

"Inkatha's existing members have been battered in many lonely rural hamlets and in many black townships and informal settlements because they insisted in holding dear the values that can bring Black and White together. In a very real sense, the opening up of Inkatha's membership is the most befitting tribute we can pay to those who have suffered to keep alive the great

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Dr MG Buthelezi at the Annual General Conference.

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negotiation politics, Dr Buthelezi said all South Africans were gravitating to centre-stage politics where there were common political perceptions to be shared. Inkatha was ready to negotiate now – but present levels of violence were too high and remained a serious threat to negotiations getting off the ground.

Negotiation, as far as Inkatha was concerned, would be about the ways and means of putting the will of the people into action. It would seek mandates from the people and would constantly report back to seek endorsements for what it was doing at the negotiating table. Inkatha would be a membership-based, democratic, grass-root organisation in which its leaders were elected and held accountable.

Inkatha had always been committed to non-violent tactics and strategies in its struggle against apartheid. Likewise, it had always pursued political objectives in such a way that the growth potential of the South African economy was not damaged.

"Whoever governs South Africa after apartheid will need high levels of sustained economic growth if political victories are ever to be translated into benefits for ordinary people. The benefits must be benefits which people can actually perceive in their own increased standards of living and in their advancement – and of that of their families."

Inkatha was therefore committed to bring about radical change in such a way in which democracy would be served by the kind of enterprise-driven economy which would be incomparably more productive than any State-controlled economy.

Summing up the challenges that lie ahead for the new Inkatha, Dr Buthelezi said: "We are challenged to put South Africa first and then to do battle with fear and prejudice so that we can set in motion a dynamic process which will transform South Africa into a normalised, Western-type industrial democracy in which there is the freedom of speech, the freedom of association and the rule of law, guaranteed by an independent judiciary and equality for all before the law and the constitution."

"The time has now come for Inkatha to put a Black/White/Coloured/Indian constituency together capable of making one total South African statement of intent and capable of mounting a South African campaign to finally eradicate apartheid and establish a new democracy.

"Inkatha has been the premier non-violent, pro-democracy black political organisation of the country. It now aims to become the premier non-violent, pro-democracy political party of the new South Africa. We can do it. We can put a non-racial, democratic Inkatha together in such a way that it will become a powerful force in the land.

"There shall be a new South Africa and there shall be a new Inkatha striving for that new South Africa. There shall be a new democracy and there shall be an Inkatha in that new democracy. We will be there because we have risen up to emerge from the past. We will be there because we have opened our doors to all race groups. We will be there with our modern, national identity as a Party which is ready to be joined – and to join with others to establish the final winning team."

"The new Inkatha will be there even when the going is tough... Whites, Indians and Coloureds can join us knowing that we will be constant to our commitments."

The Four Great Tasks

These are the four great tasks to which the New Inkatha has dedicated itself – as spelled out by Dr Buthelezi to the conference:

TASK 1:

To establish an open, free, non-racial equal opportunity, reconciled society with democratic safeguards for all people.

TASK 2:

To harness the great resources of the country to fight the real enemies of the people, namely: poverty, hunger, unemployment, disease, ignorance, insecurity, homelessness, and moral decay.

TASK 3:

To establish political and economic structures that encourage enterprise and create more wealth, and make it possible to redistribute the wealth of the country to the benefit of all people.

TASK 4:

To ensure the maintenance of a stable, peaceful society in which all people can pursue their happiness, and realise their potential, without fear or favour.

Dr Buthelezi said: "If we pursue these tasks, we will emerge as both good and powerful. Institutionalised South Africa will support everything we do to achieve them. The most South African thing we can do in fact will be to achieve them.

"The pursuit of these four great tasks will make Inkatha an essential key to the peaceful transformation of South Africa into a free, non-racial, multi-party democracy."

Inkatha had the political

organisation – and it had the scale of support and the strength – to build the partnerships that would be needed to sustain a stable and effective government in South Africa after apartheid.

"Moreover, in pursuing its four great tasks, Inkatha will establish the circumstances in which its policies will sustain a growth economy in South Africa. We will plan to create the wealth required to solve the economic and social problems that are the heritage of apartheid.

"In pursuing the four great tasks, Inkatha will also be creating the circumstances in which it can realise the ambitions, and fulfill the needs, of the present poverty-ridden Black population of South Africa.

"Inkatha will be there to bring people of different race and cultural groups together in a unity that is rich in its cultural and racial diversity. Inkatha pledges freedom and security in a democratic society which will create wealth for all to share. Inkatha has so composed itself – and so directed itself – that it can guarantee growth and prosperity based on security, freedom and enterprise.

"Inkatha knows that unless there is reconciliation during the process of eradicating apartheid, South Africans will not be able to develop the national will which runs across all race groups to establish a democracy and to maintain it thereafter. Inkatha knows that the best way of doing this is by normalising South Africa in a bold and purposeful step-by-step discarding of the worst that there is and the preservation of the best there is. It is in the process of normalising South Africa that Inkatha offers the best hope for the future."