

“The Struggle Will Intensify”

Statement by Andrew Masondo on the occasion of June 26th, South African Freedom Day.

June 26th this year marks the 32nd Anniversary of the first Freedom Day which was called to protest against the wanton killing of 18 members of our working class who in protest against the banning of their vanguard movement, the Communist Party of South Africa under the notorious Suppression of Communism Act, called a strike on May 1st 1950. The African National Congress, the unifier of all revolutionary forces in our country called a prayer and protest meeting on June 26, 1950 to express its total rejection of the diabolic act which had nothing to do with the suppression of communism but had everything to do with the suppression of the right to struggle for freedom, to object to the banning of one of the pillars of the revolutionary movement – the Communist Party of South Africa, also to pay tribute to the heroic sons and daughters of our people and pledge to fight until victory is achieved.

SIGNIFICANCE

This June 26th also marks the 30th Anniversary of the great and heroic campaign against unjust laws in 1952. This event is of great significance in the history of our struggle and people. It liberated our people from the fear of gaol, it mobilised our people throughout the length and breadth of our country into a disciplined and determined force to strengthen the liberation movement against a fascist and brutal enemy. It gave our people a practical lesson in the concept of unity in action. All the sections of our people, Africans, Coloureds, Asiatics and Whites acted in unity and united in action. It became a political means of communication amongst our people. It prepared the ground for the Congress of the People and many other united actions by our people against the common enemy, notably the struggle against Bantu Education and Bantustans. The volunteer corp developed during this campaign is the seed that nurtured the People's Army Umkhonto We Sizwe. The Volunteer-in-Chief, Nelson Mandela, became the first Commander-in-Chief.



FREEDOM CHARTER

This day therefore also marks the 27th Anniversary of the Freedom Charter, the document of the people of South Africa, the rallying point for revolutionary unity and activity, the document that offers a clear and revolutionary alternative to racist, fascist brutal system existing in our country now.

The history of our struggle is red with the blood of the innocent, defenseless and peaceful women and children, peasants and workers, students and intellectuals — black and white — killed to satisfy theoretical experiments of racists and fascists, to satisfy the economic lust of colonialist warmongers and voracious capitalists within and externally. It is the struggle against this state of affairs that the African National Congress has been waging for seventy years (70 years). 49 Of these 70 years have been years of trying everything in the book to solve the South African problem without resort to violent means.

What has the African National Congress done to try and solve the problem of our people?



The Opening of the Defiance Campaign, 26 June, 1952.

MOBILISATION

It has engaged in the mobilisation of the internal forces of progress to wage a relentless fight against the forces of reaction and oppression. It is in this vein that the ANC called the Congress of the People to determine a common programme for action and fostered the united front that came to be known as the Congress Alliance constituting of the ANC, the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. All these organisations pledged to see to the establishment of a democratic South Africa on the principles enshrined in the Charter. The ANC also developed a close working relationship with the SACP on the basis again of both organisations accepting the document of the people, the Freedom Charter, as a basis of co-operation and the unity in action that is a development of our struggle.

In 1961 after the regime had banned the ANC as a result of its activity *before, during and after the 1960 massacre of our people in Sharpeville and Langa*, the ANC once more called on the people to examine the way forward at a conference called the African All in Conference, all organisations and people's movements were invited. Again the aim of the ANC was unity of purpose of our people and to act in unity and unite in action.



The Massacre at Sharpeville

YOUTH

The ANC has always concerned itself with the organisation of the youth inside the country. This is made obvious by the role it gave to its own Youth League since its inception in 1943. In 1961 the ANC paid attention to the organisation of students and youth. It encouraged the formation of the African Students Association (ASA) which was banned after the 1963 arrests. The ANC has always appreciated the work done by the NUSAS. It organised youth clubs during the early sixties. The ANC has always encouraged the organisation of students and therefore it appreciated the formation of SASO, SASM, AZASO and COSAS. It has time and again paid tribute to the role of the youth, thus declaring 1981 the Year of the Youth and this year in August convening the Conference of youth of the ANC to exhort them to step up their role in the mobilisation of youth internally and externally. The ANC youth has played an important role in the continental and international youth movement.

In 1980 during the 25th Anniversary of the Freedom Charter, once more the ANC mobilised the people of South Africa to express themselves on the relevance of the Freedom Charter and renew the mandate – this was done by the people without ambiguity.

The campaign against the 20th Anniversary of the fascist republic again showed the ability of the ANC and its allies to be steeped in the people. 1980 and 1981 developed the level of the South African struggle to a very high level in terms of political, economic and military action by our people led by the ANC and its allies. The people have literally unbanned the ANC.

WORKING CLASS

What is extremely encouraging is the activity of the working class who are not only engaged in economic struggle, but also political struggle. In the history of our struggle the working class has never shown such a level of unity in action. They are also forging a unity of organisation which seems to be in sight. The political and military struggle will be escalated.

In the continental sphere the ANC has done a great deal of work to the involvement of all efforts in the mobilisation for the common execution of the African revolution. It has forged good relations with the peoples and governments of Southern Africa who historically are part and parcel of our people. We are one and have one destiny.

It is significant that this day falls during a Council of Ministers meeting of SADCC. The people of South Africa and the ANC are viewing with keen interest this organisation because it is part of our struggle against the South African regime. It seeks to reduce and even eliminate if possible the dependence of our sister peoples on the racist regime of Botha and Malan.

NAMIBIA

This day falls at an important time for the struggle of our sister people of Namibia. We want to make it clear that to us the Namibian struggle is not an object of solidarity but it is part of our own struggle. We are not supporters of the Namibian struggle but participants. That is why we are always involved in the mobilisation of international and continental support for the Namibian cause with the vanguard movement of the Namibian people, SWAPO.

We do not regard the peoples of the Front-line states and neighbouring countries, namely Lesotho and Swaziland, as supporters of our struggle. We regard them as fellow participants because the sacrifices they have to make for the South African and Namibian struggles are no less than those we make.

INTERNATIONAL

We are part of the struggle for peace and independence and friendship in the international arena. It is therefore not surprising that we celebrate

this day jointly with the Communist Party of Uruguay. The ANC and this organisation have in fact signed a mutual co-operation treaty because we fight allies, the South African fascists and the Uruguayan fascists. We believe in Unity in Action of progressive forces the world over. That is why we are founder members of the Afro-Latin American Solidarity, the Afro-Arab Solidarity, ICOSA, we are members of the World Peace Council and Afro-Asian Solidarity.

We are part of the anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist forces because these forces are forces which are for progress. The imperialists and the colonialists have a stake in the continuation of our oppression.

Who are our friends?

Our friends are those who declare their solidarity with us but do not only end there. They also act in solidarity with us. The Socialist Community have time and again expressed solidarity with us and acted in solidarity with us. They have given us diplomatic and material support. Therefore they are our friends. The oppressed people of Asia and Latin America are not only our friends, but our fellow combatants. The progressive peoples of the Western World have expressed solidarity and also acted in solidarity in the organisation of anti-apartheid movements and other support groups. The countries of Africa and the peoples of Africa are ourselves.

The ruling cliques in the imperialist countries and the multinationals cannot pretend to be our friends. They express solidarity with the Botha-Malan regime and also act in solidarity with this regime. Instead they go to various extents to discredit our just cause like the Denton debacle and scandal organised by the Reagan regime.

PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

We want to express our complete support for the Palestinian people, the Lebanese people and Syrian people against whom the wanton and unprovoked aggression and murder of women and children are unleashed by the Zionists abetted by the Reagan regime. We pledge our continued support for PLO, the leader and representative of the Palestinian people. We hope the international community pressurises the Israeli aggressors to stop this aggression.

We also express support for the people of El Salvador, Guatemala and other progressive South American countries. We obviously must specially express solidarity with the people of Uruguay in their struggle led by the Uruguayan Communist Party against fascism for social progress and peace.

We join the people of Mozambique in celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the formation of the dynamo of their revolution, FRELIMO. We wish them success in the construction of a socialist society to the benefit of the people. We also express our gratitude for the role they played in the Southern African revolution in particular Zimbabwe and our own struggle. We have no doubt that they will continue with their support for the struggle of our people.

PRA

We express our gratitude for the constant and unwavering support given to us by the MPLA Workers Party, the government of the People's Republic of Angola and also appreciate the sacrifice made by the Angolan people in their contribution to the liberation of the Namibian people and our people. We unconditionally condemn the imperialist manoeuvres and South African aggression. We join the people of Angola and their leadership in declaring that the question of the presence of the Cuban comrades is a question of the right of Angola to exercise its independence and sovereignty. It has nothing to do with the Namibian independence.

We express our commitment and solidarity to the Namibian struggle led by SWAPO and congratulate SWAPO and PLAN on their successes in the course of the intensification of both political and military struggle.

We call on our people to take note of the desperate manoeuvres of our enemy in response to the intensification of the struggle. The enemy is unleashing wanton repression attempts at bringing about division between us and the neighbouring states like by arbitrarily giving away our land and people.

Let us confront the enemy in all fronts, strengthen the progressive trade unions and work for one trade union movement, strengthen the popular movements engaged in the day to day struggles. The African National Congress calls you to join its ranks and the ranks of Umkhonto We Sizwe whether you are African, Coloured, Indian or White.

You have a home in your revolutionary movement. Unite in Action and Act in Unity.

FORWARD TO VICTORY!

AMANDLA NGAWETHU!

MAATLA KE A RONA!

POWER TO THE PEOPLE!