African National Congress (South Africa)

CONDEMNS THE ASSASSINATION OF COMRADE JOE GQABI

The Botha-Malan racist clique of the regime of terror in South Africa has committed yet another cowardly and dastardly act against the freedom and peace-loving forces of our country, Africa and progressive mankind by its cold-blooded assassination of Comrade Joe Gqabi, a member of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress, on Friday evening, 31st July, at his residence outside Salisbury, Zimbabwe. This criminal act of terrorism reflects the desperation of the enemy who can no longer contain nor suppress the upsurge of the revolutionary forces that are gaining ground by the day inside the country, under the leadership of the African National Congress.

Comrade Joe Gqabi, a son and a product of the liberation struggle, symbolises these indomitable forces of resistance to oppression and exploitation. His was a life of struggle and sacrifice. He dedicated the whole of his life to the cause of liberation. He served a 10-year jail sentence on Robben Island, together with some of the top leaders of our movement – Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeki, Kathrada and others. During all the trying moments of his life, the enemy could not break his will and commitment. On his release from Robben Island he continued with the struggle under dangerous conditions of illegality and police persecution. This led to his arrest on charges under the so-called Terrorism Act in the well known Pretoria 12 trial of 1977. Ultimately he was forced into the external mission of the ANC where he still continued with his leadership role undeterred.

Never before have the South African racist rulers been confronted by such a powerful and united force from the oppressed. This savage act, in part, explains the reaction of the enemy to this rising revolutionary tide and the vanguard role played by the African National Congress and its allies in struggle. It is the key element in the criminal apartheid regime's strategy of destroying the ANC politically, eliminating its leaders and militants physically, at home and abroad. An important ingredient of this strategy consists in the intimidation of the Front Line States through open and unprovoked acts of aggression, as we are witnessing in Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland.

The tragic and untimely departure from the scene of struggle of this gallant son of our country is a great loss to our movement and the oppressed people. We dip our revolutionary banner in memory of our fallen leader and hero. We pledge to advance the struggle, for which Comrade Joe lived and sacrificed his life, to new and higher levels.

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES!

SIMON SIPHO MAKANA
for the
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE