

MESSAGE OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE OCCASION
OF 8TH JANUARY 1986, DELIVERED BY COMRADE
PRESIDENT O. R. TAMBO.

Comrades,

As the New Year begins, and on the occasion of the 74th anniversary of your vanguard movement, the African National Congress, we extend to you our warm revolutionary greetings. We salute you also in the name of the people's army Umkhonto We Sizwe.

We speak to you fully aware of the immense responsibility that rests on all of us to make the apartheid system of oppression and exploitation, repression and aggression a thing of the past. It is our singular honour that we have been charged with the serious responsibility to point the way forward in the coming period. We approach this task with the same seriousness that has inspired you as you launched countless heroic mass battles during the year that has just ended.

The message of that year, the Year of the Cadre, is simple and yet momentous. It is that the end of the criminal system of apartheid is in sight. Nearly four decades of illegal rule by the heirs of Hitler is coming to a close and with it, centuries of colonial and racist white minority domination. There is nothing that the Pretoria regime can do that can change this historic outcome of our struggle.

Our uninterrupted forward march has thrown the apartheid system into an enormous general crisis. A central feature of this crisis is the rebellion of millions of our people against the criminal system. Even the most stubborn racist can now see that we are no longer prepared to live as slaves and are determined to liberate ourselves whatever the price we have to pay in human lives.

Realising that power is slipping out of its hands, the Botha regime cannot rule in the old way any longer. Hence it has adopted new and more brutal ways of governing our country to save itself from destruction. These include the proclamation of martial law, handing over administration of large areas of our country to the murderous army and police, the use of secret death squads, the assassination of our leaders, massacres, mass arrests, stringent control of the press, continuing external aggression and the murder of our people outside our country.

Despite these extraordinary measures designed to safeguard racist rule and reassure the white minority, the reality is that the white power bloc has never been as divided as it is today. Conflict, indecision and fear of the revolution within this bloc has extended to within the ranks of Botha's own cabinet.

An important part of the crisis afflicting the racist system is the gathering collapse of the apartheid economy. We the oppressed and exploited, know the bitter meaning of this crisis. We know the harsh reality of retrenchment, unemployment, a galloping cost-of-living and banishment to the Bantustans and resettlement camps.

Now, the burden of the economic crisis brought about by the apartheid system is beginning to weigh heavily on the whites as well. White unemployment is increasing. Many conscripts return to civilian life without jobs and with no prospect of employment. Thousands of small and medium

businesses have collapsed. Individual bankruptcies have multiplied without stop.

Completely unable to deal with this enormous general crisis, Botha has increasingly lost contact with reality. Illusions are taking the place of facts. The hollow dreams of a tyrant appear to him to be the very essence of policy. Botha relies on bombast and bluster to hide the fact that he is no more than a fleeting shadow on the world stage.

The Botha regime has lost the strategic initiative. That initiative is now in our hands. The racist regime has no policy and can have no policy either to save the apartheid system from sinking deeper into crisis or to extricate this system from that crisis. Its political programme has been reduced to a sham. Its ideological platform has collapsed. All it can do now is to react to events from day to day, without any consistent plan and without any overall objectives, except to keep itself in power for as long as possible.

It can no longer guarantee a bright future for the white social forces on which it rests. At the same time, the Botha regime is confronted with our mass revolt. Botha knows that the masses of our people will not stand by passively while he tries out one apartheid experiment or another. We shall not abandon our forward march, allow ourselves to be diverted from our goal of one person one vote in a united South Africa, or in any way cooperate with the Botha regime in the execution of programmes aimed at the perpetuation of the apartheid system.

Taken together, these factors signify that strategically the enemy is on the defensive. The critical point is that any counter-offensive the oppressors may launch to gain some tactical advances will, at the same time, only result in further worsening their strategic position.

The fact that the Botha regime has lost the strategic initiative, and is therefore on the defensive all along the line, is of decisive importance for the further advance of our struggle. We have forced the racists into this position through consistent struggle both inside and outside our country. This is an inspiring victory of historic significance.

The principal conclusion we should draw from this situation is that through our sacrifices, we have prepared the conditions for us further to transform the situation to that position when it will be possible for us to seize power from the enemy. Thus the central task facing the entire democratic movement is that we retain the initiative until we have emancipated our country.

We must achieve this by going on the offensive on all fronts, continuously and boldly. We have to fight with a clear purpose in mind, with a definite perspective of our strategic and tactical goals so that we can deploy and utilise our forces to the best advantage. Victory demands that we also continue to work for the maximum unity of all our fighting contingents and the democratic movement as well as a coordinated approach towards the four pillars of our struggle.

Our strategic goal must be to shift the balance of strength decisively in favour of our struggle, through the further ripening of the revolutionary situation beyond the point where the regime is not able to rule in the old way to the stage where it is in fact unable to govern. Thus, we must continue to make South Africa ungovernable and apartheid unworkable. In the attack we must aim further to weaken the Botha regime drastically,

to sap its strength, to take away from it even the capacity to launch a limited counter-offensive.

Simultaneously, while on the march, we must build our forces into an ever more formidable united mass army of liberation, an army that must grow in strength continuously, able to deliver and actually delivering bigger blows at every stage and fighting as a conscious force with its eyes firmly fixed on the goal of the destruction of the apartheid regime and the transfer of power to the people.

The central focus of our continuous offensive has to be the imposition of the will of the democratic majority over the racist minority, however desperate and stubborn the resistance of this minority.

In this regard, a question of primary concern to us all is that of education. We have stated our stand on this issue in clear unequivocal terms. What we want is one democratic, non-racial, free and compulsory system of education. The broad principles underlying that alternative system of education are contained in the Freedom Charter.

We take this opportunity to salute our students who have continued to march forward in unity and in an uninterrupted and organised offensive, undeterred by the illegal banning of their organisation, COSAS. This achievement is a victory of the entire democratic and revolutionary movement of our country and is worthy of the young lions of the struggle that our students and working youth have become.

This year, we shall be observing the 10th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising. We shall therefore cast our minds back on a period during which thousands of our youth were killed and maimed in the struggle for a democratic system of education in a democratic country. A whole generation is growing up and has known nothing but daily violence meted out in the streets by the armed killers of the apartheid regime.

To honour and pay everlasting tribute to the thousands of our students and working youth whose blood has drenched our Motherland, in the struggle for freedom and in recognition of their resolve to march forward to victory, we declare June 16 South Africa Youth Day. We are confident that our youth and students, through the length and breadth of our country, will prove themselves worthy of this National Honour.

We owe these young lions of our struggle and the nation as a whole, an obligation to institute an alternative system of education during this year, the 10th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising. We held an important national conference on this question in Johannesburg and adopted decisions that are of singular significance to the entire democratic movement and to us as a people.

Above everything else, what we shall need in order to realise the programme of action we set ourselves, is the maximum unity of the students, teachers and parents and of the entire democratic movement, including the community and student organisations, the trade unions, the youth and women's movement, religious, and all cultural and sports organisations. United in action, we have the ability to win our struggle for an alternative system of education, to secure the release of all student leaders and activists imprisoned by the Pretoria regime, to force the lifting of the ban on COSAS and to win all the other demands that we have agreed upon.

Of great importance also is the need for us to ensure that we have a strong, organised youth and student movement reaching into all schools and all areas of our country, capable of continuing to organise all our youth to act with the same discipline and unity, on a national scale, that we have seen in the past. We must continue to work for the establishment of a national youth organisation. To win our demands, we must be organised.

We also seize this occasion especially to welcome most warmly the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions. We extend to its leaders, its affiliated unions and to the membership of those unions the revolutionary greetings of the ANC leadership, inside and outside prison and inside and outside our country, as well as those of our entire membership.

The struggle to form one democratic trade union centre has been hard and protracted. Many comrades have spent countless hours working to achieve the result that was consummated with the formation of COSASTU. We all acted in this manner convinced of the need for the unity of the working class of our country, of the imperative to defend and advance the interests of this class and of the necessity of the organised, united and conscious workers to remain in the front ranks, and as an integral part of the mass army of revolution that is today shaking the apartheid system to its very foundations. The formation of COSATU has therefore added enormously to the strength of the democratic movement as a whole and is a victory which this movement must defend at all costs.

We appeal to those democratic trade unions which still remain outside the fold of COSATU to reconsider their positions. We are convinced of the maturity and honesty of both their leaders and members. Accordingly we are certain that at this critical moment in the history of an entire people and region, they will find a way to overcome all obstacles that bar their way to join COSATU.

Many problems remain to be solved to fashion the new trade union Congress into the instrument of working class and national liberation that the delegates visualised at the founding conference in Durban. These include the transformation of the general unions into industrial unions, and the organisation of the unorganised and the unemployed. These are important tasks whose accomplishment rests on the shoulders of both COSATU and the democratic movement as a whole.

Fellow Workers,

During the year 1986, we shall mark two historic anniversaries. These are the 40th anniversary of the great mineworker's strike of 1946 and the 100th anniversary of May Day - International Workers' Solidarity day.

In connection with the 40th anniversary of the great miners' strike, we call upon the entire democratic forces and especially the trade union movement, to draw on the revolutionary traditions of the African Mineworkers in order to enhance the contribution of the workers to the cause of national and social emancipation.

It is totally unacceptable that up to its 100th anniversary, May Day in South Africa, has remained an ordinary working day. We therefore fully support the workers' demand that from 1986 onwards, May Day should become a fully paid public holiday. Our entire democratic movement must support the organised trade union movement in the struggle to realise this demand.

That outstanding product of the creative initiative of the masses of our struggling people, the United Democratic Front, has borne the brunt of the futile terrorist onslaught of the Botha-Malan-Coetzee regime to defeat our mass offensive and to suppress our democratic organisations. To this day, the threat of prohibition hangs over the UDF. Yet we are convinced that, having more than survived the assassination and imprisonment of its leaders, the cold-blooded murder of its followers, the banning of its meetings and so on, the UDF will overcome all attempts by the enemy to wipe it out of existence. Practice has more than amply demonstrated that the struggling masses of our country need the UDF as an instrument to maintain, advance and deepen our united action.

We salute all its leaders, its affiliated organisations, its members and its followers. We hail all those of its leaders and activists who are in prison and those who are facing trumped up charges which include treason, murder and public violence. We call on all our people to stand by these patriots.

We pay homage to the outstanding leaders and others of our people who were murdered this past year by the death squads, the army, the police and hangmen of the apartheid regime. Among these are Victoria Mxenge, Matthew Goniwe, Andries Raditsela, Ben Moloise, Samuel Tshikudo, Bathandwa Ndondo, Mohamed - Allie Razak, Mita Ngobeni, Sipho Mutsi, Ian Zemisa, Nelly Madonsela, Lizo Ngoana, Daniel Mabenyane, Mandlenkosi Kratshi, Ivan Langehoven, Ngoako Ramalepe and Kenneth Letlatla. Their example of selfless service to the revolution will live on, inspiring us to intensify the struggle until victory. Those who assassinated them will be brought to book.

We shall not forget those who have disappeared and have so far not been accounted for. Neither shall we forget the patriots such as Thami Mnyele, George Phahle, Nomkhosi Mini, Jackie Quin and Leon Meyer and others who were murdered in Maseru and Gaborone. The names of Mally Blackburn and Brian Bishop will also be inscribed on the roll of honour.

In the light of the situation which obtains in our country today, the religious community has an immense and urgent responsibility to act in defence of life itself, and accordingly, to fight for justice and peace. Inspired by their own faiths, this important sector among our people must further enhance its contribution to the struggle to end the apartheid system and to create a society in which the right to life will be respected.

At this point, we would also like to pay special tribute to the women of Mamelodi, both as a particular detachment of the democratic women's movement and as a force exemplifying the courage and determination of the hundreds of thousands of women who have stood at the centre of our mass struggles this past year, throughout the country.

The response of the apartheid regime to the peaceful march of the women of Mamelodi, which ended in a massacre, illustrates the fear that this regime has of the united offensive of the oppressed and exploited women of our country. This year we are observing the 30th anniversary of the historic women's march on Pretoria, an event which lives on as a source of great inspiration to all our struggling people. It will be the task of our women folk - to emulate the example we set ourselves three decades ago and last year, to unite and fearlessly join the mass offensive against the Botha regime in even greater numbers. We should also continue to work for the formation of a national women's organisation.

During the momentous Year of the Cadre that has just passed we have also produced new organisational formations and adopted new forms of struggle in keeping with the heightened pace of our revolution. We refer here to the mass combat units that we have formed to carry out various tasks, including those related to the destruction of the organs of government of the apartheid regime and to making the country ungovernable. We refer also to the measures we have taken, among other things, to protect our leaders and to maintain revolutionary law and order in various localities throughout the country.

It is fitting that these developments have taken place during the Year of the Cadre and in keeping with perspectives that your movement, the ANC, put forward for that year. Our struggle has gained enormously by the emergence of these collectives of revolutionary cadres, which are organised, rooted among the masses, ready to pay the supreme sacrifice if necessary, committed to the perspectives of our movement as a whole and loyal to the leadership of that movement.

We salute all members of these combat units and commend them for the courageous and disciplined manner in which they have carried out their tasks. We urge the masses of our people to persist in the positions they have taken, of giving both the necessary protection to these units and the cooperation which the further advancement of our struggle demands.

While it is true that we have lost many cadres in the confrontation with the forces of repression, qualitatively, victory on the military front belongs not to the enemy but to the people. This is so exactly because in the face of the harshest enemy repression, we have succeeded both to intensify our military offensive and to enlarge the popular forces inside our country, organised to wage the struggle arms in hand.

This past year we made significant strides towards the transformation of our armed confrontation with the apartheid regime into a people's war. Of crucial importance in this regard has been the creation of mass insurrectionary zones in many parts of our country, areas where the masses of the people are not only active, but are also ready in their hundreds of thousands to assault the enemy for the seizure of power.

At the same time, we have seen how the apartheid regime, intent on maintaining itself in power at all costs, has sent into our townships white soldiers and police, as well as black mercenaries, with orders to murder, rape and destroy at will - shooting infants, raping young girls and going on a crazed orgy of blood-letting. This is precisely the reason why the fascist Botha-Malan-Coetzee regime must be swept off the surface of the earth and our country transformed into a democratic, non-racial and peaceful entity. Therefore we must fight. We must organise and arm ourselves to fight harder and better for the overthrow of the apartheid regime.

Accordingly, an urgent task we face this year is the rapid expansion and extensive activation of Umkhonto We Sizwe within the country, drawing in the millions of our people into combat. Building from what we achieved last year, we must prepare for and conduct people's war with the people's army, Umkhonto We Sizwe, heading our mass military offensive. We have to increase greatly the number of guerrilla units of MK, as well as the mass combat units. We must further strengthen the links between the guerrilla and combat units in order to build a vast army that can carry out both offensive and defensive tasks. We must draw on the resolve of our people in the mass insurrectionary zones to build up this force while working to ensure that these zones multiply in number to cover our country in its entirety.

To retain the strategic initiative, apart from confronting the army of occupation in our areas, it is essential that we carry and extend our offensive beyond our township borders into other areas with even greater determination. We also need to mount a continuous assault on the economy to deny the enemy the material base which gives it the means to conduct its campaign of terror, both inside and outside our country.

The charge we give to Ukhonto We Sizwe and to the masses of our people is: attack, advance, give the enemy no quarter - an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth!

Once more, we call on our white compatriots, and especially the youth, to break ranks with the apartheid system, to refuse to serve in its armed forces and no longer to mortgage their future to a racist system that is doomed to destruction. We call on them to win their place in the future democratic South Africa by joining the struggle to turn that future into reality. The business community must stop producing weapons that are used to murder our people. Together, black and white, we will destroy the monstrous apartheid regime and, as equals, rebuild our country for the benefit of all its citizens. The time has come that our white compatriots should join the mass democratic struggle in their millions. The crisis in our country does not permit of onlookers.

Those among the black people who have been dragooned or bought to serve in the armed forces of the enemy should refuse to offer themselves as cannon fodder, as assassins in the pay of a regime which holds them and their people in contempt. To these we say, prepare to turn your guns against the common enemy of the people. When the bells of victory toll, you too must be counted among the liberators of our country.

The combined mass political and military offensive that we must conduct this year at a heightened level and in a systematic manner requires of us all to continue to work even harder to realise the tasks that we set ourselves during the Year of the Cadre. Of particular importance in this regard is the task, as we said last year, of building a strong underground presence of well-organised revolutionary cadres, drawn from the fighting masses and integrated among them. We must continue to strengthen and expand the underground structures of the ANC, ensuring the active presence of our movement everywhere in the country.

As part of our all-round preparation for the days ahead, as you know, your vanguard movement, the ANC, held its historic Second National Consultative Conference. That conference consolidated our unity as never before and clearly pointed the way forward to victory. Its results constituted a decisive defeat for the enemy which had hoped that at the end of the day our movement would be paralysed by internal disputes and endless power struggles. It reinforced the ability of your movement to march at the head of the millions of our people, for a decisive assault on the apartheid regime of terror, to dislodge it and transfer power to the people.

The delegates endorsed the fundamental perspective of our revolution: that the key factor for victory is the political mobilisation and organisation of all the oppressed and exploited - in particular the working class. Taking into account the balance of forces in our situation, the intrasignee of the white ruling clique and the violent nature of the apartheid system, the conference underlined the need and urgency of intensifying and transforming the armed struggle into a real people's war.

Our strategy therefore is one that must combine a heightened mass political advance on all fronts and an escalated and resolute military offensive. This was the spirit that dominated our conference! This is the order of the day!

It will therefore be clear that the strategic and tactical thinking and approach of our movement has not shifted, nor are there any fundamental developments in our situation that warrant any change. This restatement of our position is done primarily to clear rumours circulating that the ANC and the Botha regime are holding secret talks. As yet there have been no such talks.

There can be no negotiated settlement of the South African question while the Botha regime continues to imprison our leaders and refuses to acknowledge that South Africa must become an undivided, democratic and non-racial country. It is today abundantly clear to all who look at our situation soberly that apartheid has proved to be a national disaster. The Pretoria regime does not want to accept this fact. It is dead set against the emergence of a fundamentally new social and political system in our country. These positions are the cause of the growing confrontation in South Africa which will not cease until our country does indeed belong to all who live in it, black and white.

We are convinced that all those who are opposed to racism and apartheid must act together to end white minority rule. In this regard, the ANC will continue to encourage individuals and groups within our country to contribute what they can towards the victory of the democratic struggle. It is with this view in mind that we have met and will continue to meet various people, including business people, politicians, trade unionists, religious people, to encourage the broadest possible united offensive against the apartheid system.

The time has come that, as part of our mass offensive to make apartheid unworkable, once more, we boldly confront the issue of that badge of slavery - the pass laws. We support the demand made inside the country that passes must go, now! To this day, as we all know, these remain one of the principal means by which the Botha regime governs us, the methods it uses to decide who we are, where we shall live and work, what the future of unborn generations shall be. The time has come that we should say no longer shall we allow ourselves to be given special labels in the country of our birth.

The cry must ring out through the length and breadth of our country this year-away with passes! By destroying this badge of slavery and humiliation, we shall free ourselves of this intolerable burden of oppression and thus move further forward to our goal of making apartheid unworkable and our country ungovernable.

This is an immense offensive which must spread to every corner of our country, encompassing cities, towns and the countryside. It must involve both men and women alike and produce the most formidable, united and sustained mass action to destroy once and for all the pass laws, influx control and our forcible removal to the Bantustans.

We must not be misled by the enemy's promise to abolish influx control and introduce what it calls positive urbanisation. Nor must we be taken in by promises of a so-called common citizenship. The Botha regime has no intention whatsoever to see the black majority live in our country as equals with our white compatriots. As far as this regime is concerned South Africa will never belong to all who live in it, black and white.

Of late, the white business community has also been very loud in demanding change. We call on them to join this mighty anti-pass campaign. They themselves must stop demanding passes from the African workers. Neither should they take advantage of the migrant labour system to victimise the workers. Rather they should work for the immediate abolition of this

criminal system. Words are no longer sufficient. Now is the time for action. No more passes! Away with this badge of slavery.

During this past year, we sharply escalated our offensive on this front. Many of those detained went on hunger strike, demanding an end to their illegal imprisonment. Mass meetings and demonstrations took place calling for the release of detainees and political prisoners. Our people in the Western Cape mobilised themselves in their thousands to march on Pollsmoor Prison backing up the universal demand for the immediate and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners.

We need also to extend that spirit of defiance to other areas of struggle. To maintain the offensive, we have to address with maximum vigour the entire issue of the enemy's attempts to suppress the democratic movement.

The challenges facing us are indeed considerable. Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Motsoaledi, Harry Gwala and others of our leaders are still in prison, held there by a regime which seems determined to keep them under lock and key permanently in defiance of the international community.

Yet others of our leaders and activists are facing various charges. Thousands have been convicted illegally and are now enduring the brutality of living in the enemy's dungeons. Unknown numbers are held under the emergency regulations and the so-called Internal Security Act.

This year we must take up the campaign with greater vigour than before - for the immediate and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners, for the immediate release of all detainees, the lifting of bans on individuals and organisations, including COSAS, the termination of all treason and other political trials, the lifting of the state of emergency, the scrapping of all repressive legislations and the withdrawal of all troops and police from the townships.

We know that the enemy will not listen to any appeals we make on any of these questions. We have no alternative but to resort to meaningful action to advance our demands. We have already tested the consumer boycott weapon and need to use it with even greater effect to halt the murderous and repressive rampage of the Pretoria regime.

In a heroic struggle, we have virtually lifted the ban on our vanguard movement, the ANC. We did not ask for the permission of the enemy to unfurl and raise the people's flag. We did not seek Pretoria's consent when we decided to speak out openly in support of our genuine leaders.

Equally, to succeed in our campaign to challenge the enemy's repressive onslaught, we need the same daring. Whereas the enemy seeks at all times to impose on us a fascist legality, we must impose on our country our own popular legality. We are the alternative power. As such, we pursue goals and share aspirations that are diametrically opposed to those of the oppressive white minority regime and must ensure that our will, as that alternative power, prevails.

Proceeding from these positions we must use everything in our power to fight and defeat the enemy's campaign of repression, recognising that the edicts that emanate from the illegitimate apartheid regime are themselves illegal acts of banditry, carried out as part of the continuing commission of a crime against humanity. In action and through action we must compel the regime to end repression now.

In some areas of our country, having destroyed the puppet organs of government imposed on us by the apartheid regime, we have reached the situation where even the enemy has to deal with the democratic forces as the legitimate representatives of the people. The establishment of people's power in these areas, however rudimentary and precarious, is of great significance for the further advancement of our struggle.

In the past, as part of our rejection of the apartheid community councils, management and local authority committees, we correctly put forward the demand for democratic, non-racial municipal councils. We must take up this demand once more. In many townships, we have abolished the puppet institutions through struggle. These victories must be consolidated by democratising the whole system of local government. For every town and every city, there must be one local authority, elected by all residents, both black and white, on the basis of one person one vote. We shall have to engage in struggle to achieve this goal and will have to consider such actions as a national rent strike in our programme of action.

The Botha regime is set to introduce what it calls Regional Services Councils. This is yet another attempt to refine and entrench the apartheid system. Furthermore, the issue which these Councils are meant to address, namely, the provision of "services" to all the group areas in each urban centre, does not answer the primary question of the right of all residents to exercise political control over their towns and cities as a whole. We are not fighting and are not dying in order to have a better system of waste disposal. We are engaged in struggle for the inalienable right to govern our country in all its parts.

We can no longer accept the situation in which we exist in the urban townships as suppliers of labour to the white areas with no access to the wealth that we create and which goes to enrich and improve the white areas of our towns and cities. In this regard, we should take the occasion of the centenary of the city of Johannesburg, which falls this year, as one for the most determined offensive to ensure that the political situation changes in this prime example of the iniquity of the system of colonial and racist rule.

White South Africa feels it has every right to celebrate this centenary. We, on the other hand, confined in black ghettos on the periphery of the city, have nothing to celebrate. We can no longer tolerate the situation in which we have no control over this city which we have built with our bare hands for a century. After a century of exclusion, let us begin a new era of democratic control of Johannesburg and all other urban areas of our country. In this way, we will proceed from people's power in the black areas to people's power over the entire municipal areas where we live.

We call on all our white compatriots in these areas to join this struggle. They too must participate in the offensive to abolish the apartheid institutions in the white areas once and for all. It is not sufficient merely to call for the abolition of the Group Areas, Separate Amenities and other acts. Now is the time to take action to realise the objective of one democratic council for each municipality, elected on the basis of one person one vote.

Our mass political offensive must of necessity also succeed to draw in the millions of our people in the countryside, both inside and outside the Bantustans. It is clear that, relative to the situation in the past we have made considerable progress in mobilising and organising the people in the countryside.

This has resulted in our people in some of these areas joining the mass offensive during this past year. They did so in such numbers that even leading spokesmen of the Pretoria regime expressed concern at the level of activation of these oppressed masses. In addition, the people's army, Unkhonto we Sizwe, has taken the armed struggle both into the bantustans and into the enemy rural military zones, striking blows that have worried the enemy and its puppets.

Much organisational and mobilisation work still needs to be done in these areas, raising to the fore such questions as the need to destroy the oppressive Bantustan system, to rise up against the blood-sucking white soldier-farmers and to address the central task of the landless masses seizing the land which rightfully belongs to them.

Thanks to our consistent opposition, the enemy now knows that it cannot even pretend that it will be able to maintain the bantustan system. Hence Botha now talks of a common citizenship. It should therefore now be more than clear to those of our compatriots who may have been duped or bribed or persuaded to accept the Bantustans that the destruction of these criminal institutions is only a matter of time. They should consider whether the time has not come for them to join the masses of the people to destroy this system and regain their honour as patriots and their dignity as men and women of principle.

The planned so-called independence of the KwaNdebele Bantustan constitutes a grievous offence against our entire people, as does the Bantustan system as a whole. Our people, across the length and breadth of our country, must unite to fight against the imposition of this bantustan on us. We salute our struggling people in this area and urge them to fight on to defeat the enemy's intentions of further entrenching the apartheid system.

This year, we shall be observing the bi-centenary of the birth of that outstanding African statesman, King Moshoeshoe I. It would be well that those who consider themselves leaders of our people should seek to emulate Moshoeshoe's example. Thus they should strive to unite the African people and not divide them, work to satisfy the aspirations of the people and not betray them, fight arms in hand in defence of the interests of the masses and when necessary negotiate as genuine representatives of the people and not as beggars at the master's table.

Today, the voice of Moshoeshoe is calling on us to unite. The enemy is busy trying to set African against African, and black people against one another. It continuously seeks to impart racial and tribal connotations to the many conflicts that are a direct result of the apartheid system. The Pretoria regime not only hopes to slow down our struggle but also to demonstrate that we are different peoples who cannot live together in peace. The racists want to prove that we have to be separated into different racial and tribal compartments, controlled and presided over by the white minority regime.

We have to defeat these enemy schemes, resist all provocations and unite in the common struggle to liberate our country from racist rule. As Moshoeshoe foresaw, our strength lies in our unity. We must guard that unity like the apple of our eye.

Our movement and our struggle enjoy enormous world support. During the Year of the Cadre the international movement of solidarity with our fighting people grew by leaps and bounds. In this area we can also say that the apartheid regime has lost the strategic initiative. No longer can it even hope to its ground, let alone score new gains for the apartheid system. So desperate has its situation become that even those whom it counts as its natural allies have begun to distance themselves from the regime of murderers and to seek out the genuine representatives of our people.

At the same time, throughout the world, ordinary men and women inspired by our own struggle are carrying out new initiatives to isolate apartheid South Africa and to extend political and material support to the ANC and the struggling masses of our country. Accordingly, this past year we have seen the inspiring upsurge of the solidarity movement in the United States under the leadership of the Free South Africa Movement, the imposition of sanctions by the international trade union movement in such countries as New Zealand, Australia, Sudan, Scandinavia, The United Kingdom, and elsewhere, trade union decisions to enforce the oil embargo, the resurgence of the international consumer boycott campaign and many other actions, in support of our struggle.

We have scored other important gains in the campaign to isolate apartheid South Africa. Many governments have taken various steps in this direction however limited at this stage. The refusal of the banks to roll over their loans to South Africa is an important victory of our struggle which has contributed to the further deepening of the crisis of the apartheid system.

Much remains to be done further to expand international action and to compel the governments of the major western powers to heed public opinion in their own countries and internationally and impose comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa. The more we act to liberate ourselves, the more resolute international action will become. It is therefore our task both to intensify the struggle inside our country and to work with the world community further to arouse world opinion in favour of our cause.

Once more, we extend special greetings to our comrades-in-arms in SWAPO as well as the Namibian people as a whole. Locked as we are in a common battle against a common enemy, we shall continue to rely on our bonds of solidarity as an important factor inspiring our own actions. The struggle to achieve the immediate and genuine independence of Namibia is at the same an important contribution towards our own liberation. Together we will win.

We have continued to derive great inspiration and encouragement from the principle and unflinching stand taken by the Frontline states as well as the Kingdoms of Lesotho and Swaziland. These countries have stood firm in the face of growing threats and actual acts of aggression and destabilisation carried out by the Pretoria against them.

The people Namibia and South Africa share a common destiny with these states and peoples. In pursuit of the common cause, we are committed to rid our continent of the apartheid monster, through struggle and to help transform our region into zone of peace.

We take this opportunity to salute our friends throughout the world, in Africa, Asia, Latin America, in the socialist countries, in Europe and North America.

We greet also the PLO and the Palestinian people, the Saharaoui Arab Democratic Republic, the Farabundi Marti of El Salvador, Fretilin of East Timor as well as the embattled people of Nicaragua and the progressive forces organised in the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

To all those forces, to the nations organised in the OAU, the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations we, the people of South Africa, pledge, during the International Year of Peace, that we shall discharge our historic responsibility to end the apartheid crime against humanity once and for all. With your support, we will achieve this goal sooner rather than later and with less bloodshed and destruction.

This year we shall be observing the 10th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising and the 25th anniversary of the formation of Ukhonto We Sizwe. These are events of historic importance in our struggle. They both emphasise the need for us to meet the repressive violence of the apartheid regime and the apartheid system with our own armed resistance. The continuing stubbornness of the racist regime and its resort to ever greater and more brutal violence had made it a matter of extreme urgency that we launch a most determined military offensive.

To help concentrate our creative energies on the attainment of this goal and in the name of the National Executive Committee of your organisation, the ANC, we declare 1986 the Year of Ukhonto We Sizwe - the People's Army! Let this Year of the People's Army see us engulf the apartheid system in the fires and the thunder of a people's war! Let the Year of MK see us mount a military offensive that will push the enemy into a strategic retreat! Let us use the opportunities that this Year gives us to replace each combatant who fell last year with a hundred more, and building on our achievements, to create a formidable fighting force of the people, superior to the enemy forces because of the justice of our cause, the discipline of our combatants and the bravery and boldness of our warriors.

During the Year of Ukhonto We Sizwe - the People's Army:

Let us mount a determined mass political and military offensive!

Let us retain the strategic initiative!

Let us, in struggle, shift the balance of power further in favour of the revolution!

Let us turn every corner of our country into a battlefield!

Let us weaken the enemy and prepare to seize power!

Every patriot a combatant : every combatant a patriot!

Amandla Ngawethu!

Maatla Ke a rona!

People's power is within our grasp!