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SECRETARY-GENERAL'S ADDRESS AT THE ANC WELCOME RALLY
Cape Town, April 29th 1990

MAYIBUYE! I'AFRIKA!
AMANDLA! ALL POWER!

Comrades! Friends! Compatriots!

We have returned. From far-flung corners of the globe we have come on a mission; a mission to bring even nearer the goal of freedom and justice to our land.

The National Executive Committee of the African National Congress greets you the people of Cape Town. We greet all the people of South Africa, at this moment of great promise and great challenges.

We bring you militant greetings from your brothers and sisters in exile:

We convey warm regards from Comrade President Oliver Tambo, who has made remarkable progress since he took ill last year. He promises to join you as soon as he has fully recovered, and wishes you even greater victories in your efforts.

We bring you fraternal greetings

- from the rest of the National Executive Committee;
- from all members of the African National Congress abroad; and
- from the heroic cadres of your army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

All of them desire to be here today; and they join your hands across the miles.

The moment when they shall be here without fear of apartheid retribution must be achieved. The time for a complete climate of free political activity must come. The hour at which the African National Congress in its entirety can start to operate fully, and to freely consult with you the people must strike. All political prisoners must be released now and with no condition. The State of Emergency must go in each and every corner of the land.

The African National Congress demands this not as favour. It is an inalienable right of all the people of our country. South Africa needs the fresh breath of free thought and free speech, freedom of association and all the rights its people deserve. Our beloved land needs all these freedoms, if the ideal of a negotiated settlement has to be turned into a reality.

This is the gist of our mission here. The National Executive Committee decided that it will meet the South African government to clear the obstacles to negotiations. Your Movement felt it necessary that such a meeting should take place not anywhere else, but on the soil of South Africa. We did not want to talk to them cut off from the heroes of this struggle, but as part of and in consultation with you the people. As we go into session on May 2nd, 3rd and 4th, we shall be reinforced by your heroic struggles, your support and your dedication to the cause of freedom and justice.

Comrades and friends!

We have returned. And our presence here today is a reflection of the changed and changing situation within South Africa. The release of our leaders - Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and others - represents such change. The unbanning of the African National Congress and other organisations is testimony to the fact that South Africa shall never be the same again. Ours is a society in

transition to a new order.

The ANC welcomes these changes. Small steps indeed they are. But they must point in one direction and one direction only: the creation of a society free of the crime of apartheid. We appreciate the apparent boldness of FW de Klerk.

But it is your struggles that have made the government to see some reason. In the bowels of the earth where you dig for minerals; in the factories and farms; in the schools and universities; in the communities; the church, mosque and temple, you have brought our country to where it is today. Apartheid is in the throes of a crisis from which it cannot recover. Its time has come to pass. Its days are truly numbered.

We pay tribute to all the struggling people, whatever their precise role and mission. We salute:

- COSATU and the rest of the anti-apartheid trade union movement;
- SAYCO and the heroic Young Lions of the land;
- South African women in all your democratic and anti-apartheid organisations;
- the communities in the ghettos organised under your civic associations;
- the patriotic and land-hungry masses in the bantustans and rural areas;
- CONTRALESA and all patriotic traditional leaders; and
- the religious leaders and communities of all faiths.

The people of South Africa as a whole are greatly indebted to the heroic democrats within the white community. The day shall soon dawn, when you will not have to be referred to as a special species of democrats, classified according to colour. Your heroic efforts, persecuted and despised within your community, has helped create the foundation for consistent non-racialism within the anti-

apartheid movement. The roots of racial harmony in a future South Africa have firmly embedded themselves in the efforts of the Cape Democrats, JODAC, the Five Freedoms Forum, End Conscription Campaign, Black Sash and many other white democratic organisations.

We salute the fighters of the people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe and the heroes in the ANC's underground formations. You have kept the torch alight and the voice of the movement resounding in the hours of need. We commend the international community which has rendered help to the oppressed people so generously, and dealt the upholders of the crime of apartheid such deadly blows.

All these efforts, within South Africa and abroad, have helped bring apartheid to its death throes. The power of the people is rising so confident and so robust.

Many have fallen in the cause of struggle. Ashley Kriel and Nkululekho Njongwe in battle within the country; Joe Gqabi and Ruth First - victims of apartheid's death squads; Solomon Mahlangu and Vuyisile Mini condemned to the gallows; Basil February and Patrick Molaoa in the plains of Zimbabwe on the way home; Matthew Goniwe and Stanza Bopape - put to death in circumstances whose mystery is now coming to light. Many more have been maimed; and many have suffered untold miseries in the countries of Southern Africa. Apartheid stands accused for all these crimes. It must go.

Through struggle and through sacrifice, we have made major strides. South Africa is indeed on the threshold of a major breakthrough towards a united, non-racial and democratic society. But the hour of celebration has not yet come. Victory is in sight but not yet grasped. The struggle has yet to be won. The question is not whether this will ever come about. The point at issue is when and how. All of us, together, must answer this question in concrete

wishes; our dreams will remain nightmares.

The African National Congress recognises the fact that new possibilities have emerged for a political resolution of our country's problems. We are here because we seek to nourish this possibility and to turn it into reality. To do so does not mean that we should abandon our principles. We must hold firm to the goals we cherish while exercising maximum flexibility in our day-to-day work. To nourish the possibility of a negotiated settlement does not mean that we should cast aside the armed struggle when conditions for its suspension and final abandonment have not yet been created. To do so would be to desert the brutalised masses and give further licence to those whose mission has always been to detain, to imprison, to kill and to maim the people.

Our humane vision and our morality dictate that we seek the least painful path to a new South Africa. But it is precisely this path that has been blocked for decades and indeed centuries. Those in the corridors of power who promise otherwise must back their statements with actual deeds. The climate for a peaceful settlement must be created, not in bits and pieces; but as an integrated whole.

We, the people know too well from our experiences, that the ideals we cherish shall not come as a gift from Tynhuis or from the apartheid House of Parliament. Our actual strength as a struggling people will ensure that what we desire is indeed achieved.

Only through active struggle can we compel the government not only to create the conditions for negotiations; but also to negotiate in good faith. Wherever we are: on the factory floor and in the mines; in the villages and townships; in the schools and universities, we must act as a united force to achieve our demands. The issues that we have put forward for a transition to a genuinely

new order must feature high on the agenda of our mass actions.

* Let us all demand an impartial Interim Government to oversee the transition to a new order. It would be asking too much of the oppressed majority for them to have faith in the present government and all other apartheid institutions to suddenly become agents of change.

* Let us in action ensure that the body to work out a new constitution for our country is a democratic one, elected and mandated on the basis of one-person, one-vote on a common voters' roll.

* Our demands for low rents and better housing, a democratic educational system, a Living Wage and many more cannot be postponed. We must assert them in action and link them with the goal of a new and democratic South Africa.

For all these struggles to have a clear purpose and to be disciplined requires strong organisation

We must build the African National Congress into a powerful organisation. We must join it in our millions. Every democrat must become an ANC member. Every ANC member must be an organiser and staunch fighter for the people's freedom. We must build the mass democratic organisations of the ANC: the Youth and Women's Leagues. Let us ensure that the courage and verve of our mothers, sisters and daughters and of the young generation course through the veins of the African National Congress.

Within our communities, Street, Area and other people's committees must take firm root. And it is the task of all residents to ensure that these committees operate on a democratic basis, representing the will of the people. Crime and hooliganism must be uprooted by the people themselves. People's "law and order" must reign.

Democratic organisations of workers, students, professionals, religious communities, traditional leaders, business-persons and all other sectors of the population must be strengthened. Broad anti-apartheid unity as achieved at the Conference for a Democratic Future must be consolidated.

The African National Congress welcomes the decision by many forces and individuals within the apartheid machineries to break ranks with the old and dying system. By rocking the apartheid boat, patriots such as Gregory Rockman and General Bantu Holomisa have significantly weakened the enemies of the people and advanced the democratic cause. The people are ever ready to accept, with open arms, all those who abandon apartheid and, in actual practice, mend their ways. The more such forces break with the past, the faster and less painful will be the transition to a democratic order.

The murder and mayhem being sown in Natal is a terrible blot in the history of our struggle. Certainly, it is not the forces which believe in a democratic South Africa who would like to see this civil strife continue. Certainly, those who demand an atmosphere of free political activity would not engage in acts which not only go against the grain of peaceful political engagement, but which also have the effect of delaying such a process. Indeed, it can only be defenders of the old order and selfish dictators-in-the-making who benefit from war among the people.

All efforts must be made to bring this strife to an end. But repeat this wish as many times as we can, this will not resolve the situation. What we need is a movement of peace among the people, uniting patriots of all political, social and religious formations. Such a movement, firmly embedded among the people can isolate and sweep aside those who worship and rejoice at the smell of human blood.

Comrades! Compatriots! Friends!

We have returned. It has been a long time since we have been home. So many things have changed since we left our dear motherland. Some of us will find our loved ones no longer there, our homes demolished; the sign-posts which used to guide us around all gone. But the most vital factor is that we find you the people determined as ever to bring to its shameful end this system which drives patriots out of their country.

We left to fight. We have returned to fight, using whatever necessary means at our disposal. When the business we have come for is over, we shall report to you.

But soon, we must return to stay.

VICTORY IN OUR LIFETIME!

AMANDLA!

MAYIBUYE!