



AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

JANUARY 8TH

STATEMENT



2021

**UNITY, RENEWAL AND
RECONSTRUCTION IN THE
YEAR OF CHARLOTTE MAXEKE**





**STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 109TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS**

8 JANUARY 2021

The people of South Africa,

Comrades and Friends,

Nearly half a century has passed since the ANC in exile issued the first statement of the National Executive Committee on the anniversary of the ANC's formation – popularly referred to as the January 8th Statement.

It was a time of great upheaval. The people of our country were suffering under a repressive regime. The liberation movements were banned, and our leaders were imprisoned, banished or exiled.

And yet, even without being allowed to gather or to organise, and without our leaders being in their midst, the message of the ANC found its way to our people.

It gave them strength, hope and courage. It lit the path to our people's victory over apartheid.



Today, we deliver the January 8th Statement at a time of great upheaval in our country and across the world.

The ANC celebrates 109 years since its founding in the shadow of a global pandemic that has led to great suffering and loss of life, that has severely damaged our economy and that has profoundly changed how we lead our lives.

None of the traditional activities we hold to mark the birthday of the ANC are taking place this year. Due to the necessary restrictions that are in place to contain the spread of the coronavirus – and the need at this time to exercise utmost caution – we are not undertaking our traditional door-to-door engagements, community meetings and January 8th rallies.

And yet even as we are unable to gather in our numbers, even as the leadership of the ANC is unable to be with you in person, the message of the ANC lives in the hearts and minds of our people.

The ANC's message is clear, and is as strong as it has ever been.

It is heard by the millions of South Africans who believe that the ideals of the ANC reflect their aspirations and their hopes for a better life and future.

The January 8th Statement is the voice of our movement.

It gives inspiration and encouragement to our members, supporters and many others across the nation.

It is an appeal to all those who love the ANC to rededicate themselves to lives of service in the cause of South Africa and its people.

It is the historical mission of the ANC to lead the transformation of our society. This role has been hard earned through decades of struggle and has been recognised by our people through successive electoral mandates.



The people of this country have entrusted the ANC with the responsibility to work with them in building a better life for all.

Over the course of its history, the ANC has lived up to this responsibility. It led the heroic struggle of the South African people against apartheid, resulting in the country's first democratic elections and the adoption of a democratic Constitution.

In government, the ANC led the reconstruction of our society from the ashes of apartheid misrule. We worked together with the people to expand access to housing, electricity, water and sanitation and social infrastructure to millions of our people. We expanded access to education and health care. Prior to the onset of the global financial crisis, our policies contributed to the revival of our economy, the creation of millions of new jobs, the stabilisation of our public finances and the reduction of poverty.

It was these achievements that earned the ANC the confidence and trust of the South African people.

The trust that our people have invested in us should never be taken for granted. Such trust, once lost, is not easily regained.

We know that to fulfil our role and discharge our responsibility, we must renew and rebuild our movement and ensure that it remains true to its founding values.

The values on which this movement was founded are integrity, honesty, tolerance, respect and, above all, service.

While important progress has been made in the renewal and rebuilding of the ANC since the 54th National Conference, there is still much to be done.

The organisation has been weakened by corruption, resistance to renewal and controversies involving ANC leaders.



These problems have widened the social distance between the ANC and the people. Unless they are resolved, they will have the effect of rendering our society rudderless at a time when firm and principled leadership is required.

At the same time, there is a danger that internal conflicts can consume us, and detract from the very real work we need to do to unite and transform our society.

For over a century, the ANC has sought to fulfil its historic mission to build a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa. In the face of the great challenges before us, it is more important than ever that we keep our sights firmly on this mission.

In this year of 2021, our foremost priorities as the African National Congress are:

Firstly, to act together with all South Africans to defeat the coronavirus. We start the year in the midst of a second wave of infections that is spreading far faster and has the potential to cause greater loss of life than the first wave. This requires effective implementation of prevention measures and a rapid and efficient programme to provide a vaccine to all our people.

Secondly, to place our economy on a path of renewal and recovery. This path must be one which overcomes the apartheid and colonial legacy of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

Thirdly, we must this year forge ahead with the fundamental renewal of the ANC. It is only an ANC with ethical, selfless and disciplined members that can lead the national effort to reduce coronavirus infections and drive radical social and economic transformation.

Fourthly, we must work to build a better Africa and a better world. Despite the damage caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we must intensify our contribution to Africa's development and to building a more just and more peaceful global order.



1. MILESTONES

As a movement, we continue to draw strength and encouragement from the great struggles fought by those who came before us.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of one of South Africa's most remarkable and pioneering leaders, Charlotte Manny Maxeke. She was the first black South African woman to obtain a science degree, was a delegate to the ANC's founding conference in 1912 and was a founder of the Bantu Women's League, a forerunner to the ANC Women's League.

She made an exceptional contribution to the struggle for the liberation of women in South Africa and challenged contemporary attitudes about the place of women in politics, society and the economy. She was a fearless leader who organised the first defiance campaign against the pass system, mobilising women to burn their passes. She organised farm workers and domestic workers and dedicated her life to improving the conditions under which African women lived.

She was a pioneer of the women's movement and the struggle for a non-sexist society. At a time when women were regarded only as auxiliary members of the ANC, Mam Maxeke's example in challenging gender norms saw the ANC in 1943 opening up full membership to women and the election of Lilian Goyi as the first female NEC member.

This year marks the centenary of the Communist Party of South Africa. Since its formation in 1921, the Communist Party has been a dependable ally not only of our movement, but of the oppressed and exploited people of South Africa. It has been at the forefront of the struggle against racial discrimination and capitalist exploitation.

The Communist Party was the first to feel the repressive wrath of the apartheid state and its members were prominent among the first men and women to take up arms to defend our people. The Communist Party has also played a critical role in the ideological development of the liberation movement.



As we celebrate this great milestone alongside our Alliance partner, we reaffirm our shared commitment to the achievement of a National Democratic Society.

Other important anniversaries that we will mark this year include:

- 150 years since the birth of the first President of the ANC, John Langalibalele Dube.
- 125 years since the birth of Clements Kadalie, founder of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union.
- 100 years since the birth of Florence Mophosho, a stalwart of our movement who was a leading organiser of the Congress of the People in 1955.
- 75 years since the first African Mineworkers Union strike, led by JB Marks.
- 60 years since the formation of the people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.
- 60 years since Chief Albert Luthuli became the first African to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 50 years since the murder of Ahmed Timol in police detention.
- 40 years since the assassination of human rights lawyer Griffiths Mxenge.
- 40 years since the Matola raid in Mozambique by the South African Defence Force, in which several ANC cadres and Mozambican citizens were killed.
- 30 years since the ANC held its first National Conference in the country after three decades of illegality and celebrated the homecoming of President Oliver Tambo.



- 25 years since President Nelson Mandela signed South Africa's democratic Constitution into law on 10 December 1996 in Sharpeville.
- 20 years since South Africa hosted the World Conference Against Racism in Durban in August 2001.

We extend fraternal greetings to the Communist Party of China (CPC) on the occasion of its centenary this year. We salute the CPC and the people of China for their support and assistance in the struggle for the freedom of the South African people.

Next month, we celebrate the 109th birthday of Ma Rebecca Kotane. Born exactly a month after the formation of the ANC, Ma Kotane struggled side by side with her husband Moses Kotane, former SACP General Secretary and ANC Treasurer General. Throughout her life she has been steadfast in her commitment to the struggle. A delegate to the Congress of the People in Kliptown in 1955 and one of the women who marched on the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956, Ma Kotane endured constant police harassment and detention, and many years of separation from her husband in exile. The courage of Ma Kotane continues to serve as an inspiration to the members of the ANC and the people of South Africa.

2. SOUTH AFRICA AND THE ANC IN 2021

The coronavirus pandemic has deepened poverty and unemployment in our society.

The pandemic has brought into sharper focus the fault lines of inequality, income deprivation, asset poverty, and lack of skills and economic opportunities among the majority of our people.

It has been a stark reminder of the lived realities of millions of people when it comes to accessing health care, housing, education, safety and security and other basic services.



For millions of South Africans, the poor conditions under which they lived before the pandemic have only gotten worse.

The economy has contracted sharply. Around two million jobs have been lost and many more people have fallen below the poverty line. Many families face hunger and hardship as we enter the new year. Many more struggle to keep up debt repayments, have had their assets repossessed and cannot make ends meet.

Without the economic and social relief measures that the government put in place, and without the urgent interventions to strengthen our public health care facilities, the situation could have been far worse.

Throughout the country, communities are still confronted by high rates of crime and violence. The lack of safety threatens and undermines their sense of well-being and hampers social and economic development. Other social problems, such as drug and alcohol abuse, contribute to violence and cause many families great misery.

The second pandemic in our country – of violence against women and children – continues to plague our society. Gender-based violence and femicide is rooted in patriarchal attitudes and is the most blatant affront to our common humanity. Ending gender-based violence in all its forms is integral to the social and economic progress of our nation.

There are still backlogs in the provision of basic services to communities, particularly in townships, informal settlements and rural areas. While great progress has been made since the advent of democracy, there are many areas that suffer from a lack of housing, access to electricity, water and sanitation, and social infrastructure. This is due both to the huge disparities of our past and to ongoing weaknesses in governance, capacity and financial management within the different spheres of government.

As we begin the arduous task of recovery, we must ensure that this is also characterised by reconstruction that addresses the fundamental inequalities



and exclusion that continue to characterise our society.

We have to decisively change the face of our economy, and not simply return the economy to where it was before the pandemic. In other words, our task is not only to ***build back better***, but also to ***build forward differently***.

To bring about this change, we need a radical programme of action that is restorative, that rebuilds and that is transformative.

Transformation is not only a fundamental obligation enshrined in our country's constitution. It is also imperative if our economy is to benefit from the creativity, talent, energy and skills of all South Africans.

Social deprivation also presents a danger to social stability and social cohesion. It threatens the rich and the poor alike.

As we have seen in other parts of the world, populist forces do at times mobilise working people against their own interests using the politics of identity. Ethnic chauvinism, protectionism, racial mobilisation, homophobia and misogyny have variously been used by reactionary forces to worsen divisions and distract from the fundamental question of an equitable political economy.

Our country has not been immune to these tendencies; and we ignore their root causes at our own peril.

This means that the historic role of the ANC as a uniting force in society against racism, tribalism and sexism is needed now more than ever before. Fundamental social transformation that eradicates the inequities of the apartheid order is key to addressing these issues.

The ANC has been given the mandate by our people to be the governing party in most of the municipalities, in eight provincial governments and in national government.



With governance comes great responsibility. The ANC must win public confidence by progressively meeting the needs of the people, accounting to communities, deploying the most capable cadres to positions of responsibility, managing public resources ethically and acknowledging weaknesses.

This is the message that every ANC member should take to heart in 2021 as our country holds the sixth local government elections since democracy.

We have to account to the people on the state of our municipalities, many of which are facing deep challenges of governance, stability, service delivery and financial management.

We must tackle the apartheid legacy of inequality and severe infrastructure backlogs at a local level and the persistent problem of unviable municipalities with weak revenue bases.

We must tackle the maladministration, poor governance and corruption in the municipalities which we govern and across the three spheres of government.

It is the ANC that must heed the cries of our people for a decent quality of life, and must rid government structures of corruption, cronyism and patronage.

In all areas, the ANC has to demonstrate that we are taking real steps to resolve the problems which our people face.

Let us not be paralysed by the complacency of incumbency.

In this the 27th year of democracy, the ANC cannot campaign on a platform that simply recounts the glories of the past.

Our people now want to hear what the ANC is going to do concretely to improve their lives. They want to see us in action serving their interests.

We owe it to them, and we owe it to the glorious history of the African National Congress, to meet the commitments we make.



The road to recovery and transformation is grounded in our democratic institutions, which are strong, durable and broadly supported by the people.

Despite our many challenges, there is great cause for optimism.

And in this we know we can count on the people of South Africa who believe in the ANC, who support the ANC and who have entrusted the ANC with the responsibility to change our society for the better.

It is the resilience and courage of the people of our country that has taken us through the most difficult of years.

It is the people of South Africa who continue to stand by us, united and determined, as we begin the task of recovery and reconstruction.

3. PRIORITIES OF THE YEAR

The priorities of the ANC for 2021 are based on the resolutions of the 54th National Conference and they are informed by the concrete conditions in which we operate. They reflect the continuity of the ANC's mission and its programme over time.

3.1 Overcoming the coronavirus pandemic

Our foremost immediate priority is to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic.

The virus is ever-present and it threatens the health and well-being of everyone in our country. It threatens livelihoods and undermines our efforts to rebuild the economy and create jobs.

South Africa is in the midst of a second wave that could prove deadlier than the first unless we all play our part to curb and defeat this virus.

We have to intensify our efforts to promote responsible behaviour, such as



physical distancing, washing or sanitising our hands, wearing face masks appropriately and adhering to other protocols.

We will continue to strengthen our health system and sustain community health interventions such as mass screening, testing and tracing.

We will, within our country's means, continue to provide social support to the vulnerable and economic support to businesses and workers in distress.

To overcome COVID-19 we are preparing to implement a mass vaccination programme that reaches all South Africans as appropriate quantities of an effective and suitable vaccine are procured.

This programme will initially prioritise health workers and other frontline personnel such as teachers and police men and women, the elderly and people with co-morbidities. We will progressively reach all South Africans through a mass vaccination campaign to achieve herd immunity and prevent ongoing transmission.

We need to actively counter the spread of disinformation relating to COVID-19 and unfounded conspiracy theories about the virus, its treatment and the development of vaccines.

Above all, as we have done over the past year, we must continue to work together as a united nation to confront the grave coronavirus threat. Our focus throughout must be on saving lives and protecting livelihoods.

3.2 Restoring the economy to growth and creating jobs

Economic recovery and reconstruction are as important as protecting the health of our nation. The pandemic has resulted in unprecedented levels of economic contraction and job losses.

We have to achieve higher levels of economic growth and investment. We have to create jobs and bring more black South Africans, women and youth into the mainstream of economic activity.



In the relief phase of our social and economic response to the pandemic, we put in place a number of emergency economic interventions. These included a temporary COVID-19 grant, top-ups to existing social grants and transferring UIF funds to firms and employees in distress.

We are now in the phase of rebuilding, and our focus is on aggressively implementing the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

At the heart of the plan is mobilising investment, creating new jobs and supporting existing ones, and accelerating industrialisation.

We are undertaking large-scale public investment in key sectors such as energy, water and sanitation, roads and bridges, human settlements, health and education, digital infrastructure and public transport. In these and other infrastructure programmes, we are also pursuing public-private partnerships.

We are promoting investment in sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and mining and tourism. We are providing support to key sectors such as poultry, sugar and automotive, as well as small-scale manufacturers and township and rural entrepreneurs. Our emphasis is on localisation so that South African businesses benefit from all areas of economic activity.

The ANC has since its founding dedicated itself to a better life for all. This can only be achieved if there is decent work and job security for all.

We have begun the process of rolling out public employment programmes that will offer greater work opportunities especially for women, youth, persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups.

The Presidential Employment Stimulus brings together all provincial governments and eleven national departments.

The ANC is immensely encouraged by the outcomes of the third South Africa Investment Conference that took place late last year. It was an affirmation that the investor community appreciates our country as a solid investment destination.



Our country's energy security remains a priority. The ANC government will in the year ahead focus on building massive new electricity generation and transmission capacity, in the process creating jobs. This will include diversifying our energy mix to ensure a significant proportion of new generation comes from renewable sources. The easing of regulations for electricity self-generation by firms and municipalities will unlock significant investment and job creation potential.

The recently established Presidential Climate Change Commission will support a just transition to a low carbon, climate resilient growth path that will ensure that no one is left behind.

There has been progress in policy reform in a number of other areas. In the mining sector, an exploration strategy is being finalised in consultation with stakeholders.

Reforms in the telecommunications sector will see the allocation of high demand spectrum. This will accelerate the rollout of 5G, enhancing our economy's competitiveness, lowering data costs and boosting the operation of SMMEs, cooperatives as well as small and large firms.

In the year 2021 we will deepen the social compacting that is so critical to our economic recovery. To this end the ANC is encouraged that there is broad consensus at NEDLAC on the actions that are needed to drive South Africa's economic reconstruction and recovery.

A critical element of success in implementing the plan is the reform of governance and the state machinery so that we can enhance the capability of the state.

The District Development Model aligns the work of the three spheres of government, ensuring that planning and implementation are integrated and actively involve all stakeholders. Through this model, we are working to bring all spheres of government closer to where people live and work.



The model focuses not only on infrastructure development and service provision within a district, but also on an economic development strategy that draws on the capabilities and endowments in the district. The model recognises that the most successful municipalities are those that work in partnership with provincial and national government, and that adversarial relationships between the spheres undermine development.

The success of our economic recovery relies in large measure on the repurposing of state owned enterprises to more effectively and sustainably fulfil their developmental mandates. This means we need to intensify the work already underway to address management and governance challenges, reduce the reliance of many SOEs on the fiscus and overcome resistance to transformation.

As we begin 2021, the ANC renews its commitment to forge ahead with building an ethical, capable and developmental state that can drive the economic recovery.

It is a commitment to managing our country's economy and public finances in a sustainable manner, so that we can retain our country's policy sovereignty and our ability to shape our own destiny.

3.2.1 Tackling poverty and improving people's lives

In the course of this year, we will intensify all measures to improve the lives of the poor. Many families are in great distress at this time, with the effects of the pandemic exacerbating widespread unemployment and rising living costs.

The social relief measures introduced by government in April last year – including the temporary top-up of social grants and the special COVID-19 grant for unemployed people – proved vital in supporting the poor at their time of greatest vulnerability.

As these emergency measures come to an end because of our limited resources, we need to intensify other poverty alleviation measures alongside



the economic recovery. This year, the ANC, government and broader society will need to continue discussions on the desirability and viability of a basic income grant to provide a social safety net to the poor.

Through our massive infrastructure and public employment programmes, we will accelerate the provision of electricity, water, sanitation and other services to those South Africans who still do not have them.

We must continue to work to reduce the cost of living for all South Africans, improving public transport and lowering the costs of electricity, water and other services. The private sector has important role to play. Large companies cannot be allowed to abuse their market power at the expense of consumers and small businesses.

Work to improve access for all to quality health care will be prioritised this year. The agreement between government and various stakeholders in the health sector on measures to improve the quality of care in the public facilities needs to be fully implemented.

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the need to accelerate the process towards the establishment of the National Health Insurance, which will reduce the huge inequalities and inefficiencies in our health system. It will ensure that all South Africans receive the treatment and care they need regardless of their ability to pay.

3.2.2 Education and skills for a changing world

Although South Africa has made great strides in improving educational outcomes over the last 27 years, our education system falls short of preparing young people for the society and economy of the future.

Education was severely disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, and the disease will continue to pose challenges for effective schooling in the year ahead. It is a testament to the determination of educators, lecturers, administrators, learners, students and parents that much of the academic year was recovered.

It is this determination that is needed as we pursue a skills revolution.

This requires that we overcome the fundamental challenge of persistent inequality in all facets of our education system. We need to work harder to ensure that schools in townships and rural areas are better resourced, that all schools meet the basic infrastructure standards and that poor and middle-class students receive the financial support they need to access and remain in tertiary education.

We must prioritise the upskilling of educators and school management. Curriculum reform to prepare learners for the 4th Industrial Revolution will be implemented.

We need to continue with the process to introduce three educational streams – academic, technical-vocational and technical-occupational. This will help ensure that learners can realise their potential and that our schooling system meets the skills and labour demands of the country's economy.

As we expand access to Early Childhood Development, we must have an intensive focus on early reading, which is the basic foundation of educational progress. This is a task that should be undertaken across society and in which ANC structures must be actively involved.

3.2.3 Safe and secure communities

It is the right of every South African woman, man and child to live in safety, secure from crime and violence. It is also a prerequisite for inclusive economic and social development.

We must work towards greater police visibility, more effective training of police and the greater involvement of community policing and safety forums in fighting crime.

We welcome the progress that has been made in combating gangsterism and organised crime, but these efforts need to be stepped up significantly as such criminal behaviour is taking a great toll on communities across the country.



The ANC must continue to be at the forefront of the fight against gender-based violence and femicide. We commend the work done in particular by the ANC Women's League and our Alliance partners in consistently campaigning on this issue.

It cannot be, and it must never be, that any member or leader of the ANC is associated with violence against women and children in any form.

We remain firm that any of our members who are found guilty of such crimes have no place in our movement. They do not belong in our meetings. They do not belong in our leadership structures. There is only one place where they belong: in jail.

Gender-based violence and femicide are a national crisis and we need to mobilise all the energy and all the resources of society to end it.

In particular, we should ensure the implementation of the National Strategic Plan against GBV that has been developed by government and civil society. We need to strengthen and expand the partnerships that have been developed through this process.

We must be more direct in our efforts to reduce alcohol and substance abuse, which are major contributing factors in the perpetration of violence.

The temporary restrictions that were placed on the availability of alcohol under the state of disaster regulations have demonstrated the extent to which abuse of alcohol fuels violence, trauma and reckless behaviour and places a burden on our health system and emergency services. We must take measures to reduce the abuse of alcohol through a combination of legislative and other measures and community mobilisation.

Whether it is in our municipalities, at provincial and national government or in public entities, the fight against corruption and state capture is gaining momentum.



We are making progress in restoring the credibility and integrity of government, and action is being taken against those who are implicated in acts of corruption.

Across all parts of society, we must continue to provide all the necessary support to our law-enforcement agencies so that they can investigate thoroughly and prosecute effectively without fear, favour or prejudice.

We are going to intensify our efforts to end state capture in all its forms. Those responsible will be held accountable and every effort made to ensure money stolen from the government or public bodies is recovered.

One of the resolutions of our 54th National Conference was to support the establishment of a commission inquiry into state capture. We need to ensure that the findings and recommendations of the Zondo Commission, which is due to complete its work in 2021, empower South Africans to ensure that such activities are never allowed to happen again.

3.2.4 Accelerated land redistribution and rural development

The struggle to ensure that the land is 'shared among those who work it' remains a historical and economic imperative. Land reform is central to meeting the aspirations of the Freedom Charter, and to redressing the wrongs of the past.

During the course of this year, we expect Parliament to approve an amendment to Section 25 of the Constitution, clearly outlining the circumstances in which land may be expropriated without compensation. This will give effect to an important resolution of our 54th National Conference and will contribute to the acceleration of land reform.

This needs to take place alongside a comprehensive land reform programme that, among other things, draws on long-standing ANC resolutions and on the recommendations of the Presidential Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture.



We will strengthen existing policies to ensure fair and equitable redistribution of land.

These include the National Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation Policy, which has a targeted focus on women, youth and persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups. The Land Donations Policy encourages those with under-utilised land, such as mines, businesses and churches, to donate land.

This year a focus will also be on resolving security of tenure that affects millions of our people through the Upgrading of Land Tenure Rights Amendment Bill, as well as on speeding up the outstanding claims of labour tenants.

The redistribution of land will be done in a manner that promotes economic growth and sustains food security. Critical in this regard will be our focus on effective support to those who have acquired agricultural land.

This will help to address asset poverty and improve the ability of many to engage in productive economic activity.

It is important that land reform is tied to integrated spatial development to ensure that both rural and urban dwellers live in sustainable human settlements located close to economic opportunities and social infrastructure.

3.3 Forging ahead with the renewal of the ANC

Only an ANC dedicated to the historic mission of building a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous South Africa can galvanise the energies of our people to confront the grave challenges of the present. It is only a focused ANC that can place our society, once more, on the firm path of building a better life for all.

The task of renewing the ANC is therefore not just a matter of organisational self-interest. It is what our society needs and deserves at this critical juncture in its history.



Although progress has been made since our 54th National Conference, we have yet to give full and decisive effect to its resolutions on rebuilding and renewing the organisation.

During the course of this year, we will focus on the vital task of building unity of purpose and unity in action. This unity must be founded on a common commitment to the core values of the ANC and serving the South African people. Unity cannot be used to shield those involved in wrongdoing from being held accountable.

We are going to strengthen the ANC's Integrity Commission, to enable it to act decisively, without fear or favour, to deal with corruption and wrongdoing in our ranks.

We reiterate, as resolved by the National Conference, that every member accused of, or reported to be involved in, corrupt practices should account to the Integrity Commission immediately or face disciplinary processes.

Members who fail to give an acceptable explanation or to voluntarily step down while they face disciplinary, investigative or prosecutorial procedures, will be summarily suspended.

The NEC will soon finalise guidelines on the implementation of these resolutions.

It is only if we stand united against corruption that we can restore the integrity of our movement.

As we begin our campaigning for this year's elections, we want to make it very clear: we will not tolerate members of the ANC who are involved in crooked practices like vote-buying, branch list manipulation to secure positions, or extending patronage to get votes.

We will not stand for any member of the ANC bringing our organisation into disrepute.



At the same time, we call on all ANC members to be mindful that they represent an organisation and not themselves.

If they are under a cloud of suspicion, conscience dictates that they should present themselves to the organisation voluntarily, without being forced to do so.

3.4 A better world and a better Africa

The grave conditions brought about by the coronavirus pandemic have not been faced by us alone.

There is no country which has not been affected. The pandemic has disrupted global trade, investment, production and travel. Economies around the world have contracted and millions of jobs have been lost.

Inequalities both within and between countries have been exacerbated. Developing countries with few resources available to mount an effective health response have been hardest hit.

At the same time, this has been an unprecedented era of global cooperation and solidarity, especially intra-African solidarity.

During our chairship of the African Union, South Africa has been instrumental in forging more effective collaboration among African countries in tackling the economic effects of COVID-19. We have worked with other countries to develop effective health responses and ensure that all African countries have access to essential medical supplies and, ultimately, a vaccine.

The ANC and the government it leads will continue to advocate for equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. Inequitable access will deepen global inequality and will set back the development goals of many countries of the South. Besides, it will set the efforts against the pandemic back, not only in the developing countries, but across the globe.



We must continue to build on the cooperation that has been forged under the pandemic to deepen the ties of collaboration between the countries and regions of the world. This includes strengthening our relations with other BRICS countries.

The ANC affirms its commitment to meeting the aspirations of the AU's Agenda 2063 of an integrated, united, prosperous and peaceful continent.

The ongoing conflicts in the Eastern DRC, Sahel region, Somalia, Ethiopia and northern Mozambique remain a major concern. They make the goal of *Silencing the Guns* more relevant and urgent. We welcome the ceasefire achieved in Libya and wish the Libyans well as they consolidate peace and stability. The settlement of the conflict in South Sudan is holding as the various parties are now working together in a unity government.

Silencing the guns on our continent will require commitment from all African leaders and the cooperation of the international community.

In advancing African unity and solidarity, the struggle of the Saharawi people for independence and self-determination should remain a priority for the continent.

In line with the decisions of our 54th National Conference, we also will implement more effective ways to support the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination.

We reiterate our call for the lifting of unfair and punitive sanctions against Zimbabwe and Cuba.

To support the advance of democracy and good governance across Africa we will continue to use the mechanisms of the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament and regional bodies. We will strengthen the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as a powerful instrument for economic integration, development and stability in our region.



Global and African cooperation around the COVID-19 response has highlighted once more the danger posed by unilateralism, which threatens to increase geopolitical tensions and undermine international stability.

We have noted, with appreciation, the rise of various social movements around issues such as racism and climate change, which provide cause for optimism.

The pandemic presents an opportunity to set the global economy along a more sustainable, environmentally-friendly, low-carbon and climate change resilient developmental pathway. To this end, recovery strategies must be aligned to the Paris Agreement to Combat Climate Change, the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and other multilateral environmental agreements.

The ANC reaffirms that the countries of Africa must be united in support of multilateralism and in the reform of global institutions, such as the United Nations Security Council, to ensure that they represent the interests of Africa and the developing world. Similarly, institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank need to operate in a manner that advances the developmental needs of all regions of the world.

We must also resist efforts to undermine a rules-based multilateral approach to international trade, as this negatively impacts the global economic recovery.

We recognise that poverty and inequality continue to fuel social instability in a number of countries on our continent, and that resolving them is key to peace and security for the entire continent.

For this reason, we are extremely optimistic about the coming into operation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) on 1 January 2021.

It offers new opportunities for industrialisation, economic growth and intra-Africa trade.

The AfCFTA heralds a new era of African integration, development and progress. Importantly, it will enable African countries to benefit from their own natural resources and reduce their dependence on countries outside of the continent for manufactured goods and services. It gives expression to the dream of generations of Pan Africanists, including ANC founder Pixley ka Isaka Seme. In his speech on ‘The Regeneration of Africa’ in 1906, Seme foresaw a continent that prospers by trading and doing business with each other in a common market.

As Africa seeks to expand its productive capacity, the increasing rate of urbanisation on the continent and its relatively youthful population provide a potential competitive advantage.

To benefit from this demographic advantage, it will be necessary for Africa to focus on skills development and social support to its population

Economic empowerment of women in Africa is critical not only to gender equality, but also to Africa’s overall economic development. We will continue to push for preferential procurement for women and favourable trade arrangements.

We remain firm in our conviction that the African continent is rich in potential. Our continent is rich in human capital, in its youth dividend, in its resources, in its environmental endowment and in its location.

Despite the weaknesses in the world economy, Africa is on the threshold of a new era of integration, growth, prosperity and development.

It is more important than ever for the ANC to forge ahead with its task of building progressive alliances, particularly on the African continent.

We will deepen efforts to build relations with fraternal progressive organisations on the continent and in other parts of the world to forge a developmental agenda that prioritises the needs of the poor and marginalised.



Through its Chairship of the African Union, which comes to an end next month, South Africa has provided vital leadership to the process of African integration, to the resolution of conflict and peace-building and to strengthening continental institutions and cooperation.

In the year ahead – which has been declared the **AU Year of the Arts, Culture and Heritage** – the ANC will continue to prioritise the African Agenda and enhance Africa’s status in the global community.

4. TASKS OF THE ANC

The renewal and unity of the ANC is a critical enabler for all these noble dreams and plans of transformation towards which we all aspire. We must therefore continue to build a critical mass towards renewal, based on the tasks from 54th and other National Conferences:

4.1 Renewal of branches as centres for community development and transformation.

Without strong local organisation and mobilisation, transformation will continue to remain elusive. We must therefore continue to build ANC branches that are true agents for change. Our branches must solve community challenges and be centres for community development and social cohesion. ANC branches must work with the local council and with other public representatives, as we have done in the campaign against COVID-19. During 2021, we must continue to strengthen the new membership system, and ensure that branches have active political and community programmes. ANC branches must be vibrant schools to grow and develop true and selfless agents for change in communities.

4.2 Cadre development and mass political education programme.

Recruiting new ANC members is not enough. We must ensure that members become activists and agents for change and transformation. In 2021, we must intensify our mass political education programme. We must also



induct and train all branch executive committees with a view of making our branches much more effective. All cadres and leaders of our movement need to complete the compulsory part of the curriculum of the OR Tambo School of Leadership. We need to instil a culture of revolutionary discipline in all our structures, starting with the adherence by all members to their oath of membership.

4.3 Strengthen Leagues and the Alliance:

We must ensure that the ANC Youth League holds its conference early this year. This will help to bring an end to the shameful era of division and inactivity. We need to engage the young people of our country more actively and directly, and ensure that they are able to participate in the programmes of the organisation.

The ANC Women's League has worked hard to promote the interests of the women of our country and has campaigned effectively against gender based violence and femicide. We must intensify our support for the Women's League and Veterans' Leagues so they play their role within the movement and across society.

As we celebrate the centenary of the SACP, we appreciate the role of the Party and its contribution to the strength and ideological advancement of the Alliance.

We reaffirm our strong alliance with COSATU. We support COSATU in its aspiration to unite the working class of South Africa in line with the call for '*one federation, one country*' and '*one industry, one union*'.

We will continue to promote the unity of all veterans of Umkhonto we Sizwe and ensure that the challenges facing military veterans are effectively addressed.

4.4 National General Council that enhances renewal and unity.

The NGC will be held in a few months and must help us to review progress since National Conference and address challenges facing our nation. It must serve as a platform to build unity of purpose around the ongoing task of



renewal. We must all, especially as leadership, commit towards these objectives for the sake of the movement and the people of our country.

4.5 Achieve a decisive mandate in local government elections.

Local government remains critical to the project of social transformation and a better life for all. Therefore, as we prepare for local government elections later this year, we must intensify provision of basic services, decisively tackle local weaknesses and speed up the introduction of the District Development Model. Building on the gains made in recent by-elections, we must reach every voter and engage those not yet registered to convince them that the ANC remains the best instrument for strong developmental local government. This must be part of our work to deepen democracy and public participation.

4.6 Effective communication and social mobilisation.

Social transformation requires a keen understanding of the mission of change, the tasks of the day and the ability to engage in the battle of ideas around this mission. The ANC must, in action, show that it has the determination, skill, integrity and commitment to steer the programme of social transformation. It must engage and convince all progressive forces and society at large of this. In this regard, disciplined communication is fundamental.

4.7 Build social cohesion towards a non-racial and non-sexist society.

The ANC must continue to lead the struggle against racism, ethnic chauvinism, patriarchy and all forms of intolerance. We must intensify efforts to bridge the historical divides among South Africans.

Programmes to build a non-sexist society must be intensified to ensure that all forms of gender discrimination, oppression, exploitation and violence are eradicated. This requires the achievement of full gender equality in all areas of life, from the home to the workplace, from the economy to the sports-field.

A united and cohesive society requires also that we end the exclusion, segregation and marginalisation that is experienced by persons with disabilities. We need to confront discrimination, prejudice and violence directed against



members of the LGBTQI+ community, and give effect to the right to equality contained in our Constitution. Every one of us must act in solidarity when we see injustice, and we must individually and collectively hold accountable those who choose to discriminate and exclude.

We need to address the way in which access to wealth, land, education, employment and opportunity remains skewed according to race, gender and class. This requires that the ANC works with all sectors of society to change the structure of the economy to allow for broader participation by black people, women, the youth and those in rural areas. We must build an inclusive economy that allows everyone to prosper.

The task of nation-building requires that we attend to the outstanding matters of investigations, prosecutions and reparations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This is important for the advancement of transitional justice both for the nation and the families of victims of apartheid era crimes.

4.8 Advance the African agenda and international work.

The ANC remains firmly rooted among the progressive forces of the world, and it must continue to advance the African agenda, especially as the historic African Continental Free Trade Area comes into effect. Inspired by the creed of Pan Africanism, we must work with progressive forces to pursue the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the achievement of a more just and equitable world order.

4.9 Modernise the ANC and ensure financial sustainability.

We must continue to improve and modernise our core organisational systems, such as the new membership system, branch functionality, our administration, elections campaign capacity, communications, research, fundraising as well as monitoring and evaluation.



5. TRIBUTES TO FALLEN HEROES

Over the past year many South Africans have lost their lives. These include fellow citizens who have succumbed to COVID-19. We continue to remember these loved ones, and we share the loss felt by family members, colleagues, neighbours and friends.

The ANC too, has lost many veterans, stalwarts and activists of our struggle during the course of 2020. We dip our banner in honour of Izithwalandwe Andrew Mlangeni, Denis Goldberg and John Nkadimeng.

We pay tribute to Achmat Dangor, Alexander Mbatha, Alfred Mtsi, Babylon Xeketwana, Benjamin Ofentse, Bicks Ndoni, Bishop Mthobeli Matyumza, Bongani Khumalo, Brian Carpede, Busisiwe Modisakeng, Celia Phoyane, Claudinah Ramasepele, Credo Mutwa, David Kolekile Sipunzi, David Moisi, Dick Muditambi, Dimakatso Matshe, Dorah Dlamini, Dumi Matabane, Elizabeth Manopole, Enock Mpianzi, Ephraim Dlova, Eric Matlawe, Evelyn Nkadimeng, George Bizos, George du Plessis, Gloria Motswasejane, Gordon Kegakilwe, Hishaam Mohamed, Humphrey Ntuli, Ignatius Jacobs, Igshaan Dangor, James Moreti, John Dlamini, John Lewis, John Vilakazi, Johnny Makgato, Joshua Nkosi, Jovan Bruinders, Joyce Pekane, Joyce Tau, Kamoreng Ishmael Ngwanaeng, Kgoši Piet Mathebe, Khetsi Lehoko, Kimi Makwethu, Koena Ramotlou, Lenin Shope, Lindiwe Myeza, Lindiwe Sithole, Linus Themba Dlamini, Lorna Khosi, Loyiso Mpumwana, Lucky Nxumalo, Lungile Pepeta, McCollen Ntsikelelo Jack, Madumane Matabane, Makgetlha Magogodi, Manala Manzini, Manzi Mashatile, Martha Mmola, Mcedisi Filtane, Meisie Kenosi, Mhleli Matyila, Michael Abrahamse, Mike Kwenaithe, Mluleki George, Mlungisi Ndamase, Mmule Maluleka, Modise Mokgatlhe, Molwedi Mokoena, Montwedi Modise, Mpho Masetlha, Mthikhala Powa, Mxolisi Gawe, Mzwandile Fanti, Ncediso Captain, Njabulo Mthembu, Nokuthula Sikakane, Nomthandazo Phungula, Nomvuzo Shabalala, Nozipho Edith Tunyiswa, Obakeng Poloko Jackals, Olpha Selepe, Paseka Kganticoe, Paul Baabua, Paul David, Peter Dambuza, Priscilla Jana, Pumza Dyantyi, Putco Mapitiza, Rajas Pillay, Rashid Saloojee, Refiloe Mahlobogoane, Ronald Mofokeng, Roy JJJ Olyn, Salome Mathatho, Samora Pezisa, Seleko Monare, Sembie John Danana, Shaheed Rajie, Si-



pho Vava, Siyabulela Pheziza, Smanga Madela, Songezo Mjongile, Sonto Jele, Sonwabo Sydwell Mbekela, Sophie Maine, Steve Thobigunya Ralane, Suzan Tlhagaswane, Teboho ‘Rivet’ Mkhize, Thabo ‘Bobo’ Madi, Thabo Makunyane, Thabo Makwela, Thandi Maloyi, Themba Khubeka, Themba Nobatana, Thobigunya Ralane, Thoko Msimang, Thomas Manthata, Toffies Moemi, Toine Eggenhuizen, Vejay Ramlakan, Victor Tsie, Vuyo Mahlati, Willie Williams, Zamuxolo Peter, Zindzi Mandela, Zoliswa Matana and Zweli Mabhoza.

We also mourn the passing of Queen Regent Nloyiso Sandile of the Ama-Rharhabe, King Thulare Thulare III of the Bapedi, Queen Mother Semane Molotlegi of the Royal Bafokeng, Kgoši SS Sekororo of the Banareng Ba Sekororo and Kgoši Sello Kekana III of the Matebele a Moletlane.

It has been difficult to lose so many women and men who played such a key role in our liberation.

As we honour their courage, dedication and selfless service, it us up to us as the ANC of today to ensure that the ideals that inspired their lives continue to guide our every action.

In that way, we shall ensure that the ANC renews itself and continues to live and to lead.

6. THEME FOR 2021

As we confront – both as a movement and a country – the greatest health crisis in more than a century, we should draw on our rich history of struggle and solidarity.

It was not long after the formation of the African National Congress in 1912, that the world was struck by the flu pandemic of 1918. South Africa was not spared from the dreadful impact of this disease, which killed as many as 50 million people worldwide.



Reflecting on that pandemic, one of the founders of the ANC, Selby Msimang, expressed the hope that “*such an epidemic would create a new spirit*” of brotherhood and sisterhood among all South Africans irrespective of race and social status.

Over the past year, the people of South Africa have demonstrated that such a spirit is possible. Let us ensure that, as we rebuild our economy and our society and as we strive to build a South Africa that belongs to all who live in it, we harness that spirit of unity, cohesion and solidarity.

In recognition of the ideals that inspired the formation of our movement, the mandate set by the 54th National Conference, and the tasks arising from the current environment, the National Executive Committee declares the theme for 2021 to be:

UNITY, RENEWAL AND RECONSTRUCTION IN THE YEAR OF CHARLOTTE MAXEKE.

Let freedom reign!

Amandla!

The ANC lives!

The ANC leads!



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