



JANUARY 8TH **STATEMENT 2024**

**THE YEAR OF UNITED ACTION TO DEFEND OUR
FREEDOM AND ADVANCE A BETTER LIFE FOR
ALL: FORWARD TO A DECISIVE VICTORY!**

8 JANUARY 2024





**JANUARY 8TH STATEMENT
OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
112TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANC**

Compatriots,
The People of South Africa,
Fellow Africans and all the progressive forces across the world,

This year marks the 112th anniversary of the formation of the African National Congress, the people's movement that led the struggle for freedom and continues to spearhead the tireless national effort to transform South Africa into a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society.

The birthday of the African National Congress is an occasion to celebrate the distinct legacy, proud heritage, achievements and best attributes of the South African nation as a whole.

We honour all patriotic South Africans, men and women, urban and rural, young and old, and successive generations of freedom fighters, who served our nation selflessly and unconditionally during the different phases of the National Democratic Revolution, our country's struggle for freedom and self-determination.



We gather in the city of Mbombela, in the beautiful province of Mpumalanga, the place of the rising sun, to celebrate our past, chart the future and outline the tasks for the period ahead.

In the diverse cultures and traditions of our nation, sunrise represents a moment of hope: the advent of a new day with opportunities for rejuvenation, reconstruction and renewal.

We are mindful that we meet in complex and difficult times, both globally and at home. At a global level the world is facing serious risks and multiple crises. These include rising inequality and poverty, the rising cost of living, economic instability and trade wars. The world is confronted by increasing geo-political tensions, the unfolding genocide against the Palestinian people, the devastating effects of climate change and the risks posed by technological developments such as Artificial Intelligence, .

Thus, in 2024, we will focus, working together with the Alliance and all sectors of society, to accelerate the reconstruction of our economy, deliver quality basic services and infrastructure, renew the ANC and society, fight crime and corruption, rejuvenate our nation and contribute towards a better Africa and world.

All these tasks will gain greater momentum as our country marks the 30th anniversary of freedom and democracy.

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF FREEDOM

Working together, we made significant progress over the last 30 years to put in place the building blocks of a National Democratic Society as set out in the Freedom Charter.

The gains of freedom and achievements of our young democracy include:

- The adoption of a transformative Constitution that guarantees



fundamental freedoms and human rights to all South Africans;

- Expansion of basic services and infrastructure to millions of people who now have access to housing, roads, education, health, water, energy and income support through a social security net;
- Launching the first phase of economic transformation by introducing laws and policies on worker rights, employment equity and broad-based black empowerment, investment in infrastructure, public employment programmes and achieving higher levels of economic growth;
- The establishment of democratic state institutions in accordance with the Constitution, such as the Auditor-General, the Commission for Gender Equality, the Pan South African Languages Board, the Independent Electoral Commission, the Public Protector and others to protect our democracy and freedoms.
- Taking our place amongst the community of nations, advancing the African agenda, multilateralism, solidarity and a peaceful and just world order.

The democratic South Africa of today is very different from the lived experiences of apartheid South Africa 30 years ago.

Over the last 30 years, the ANC-led government has made tremendous strides in empowering women. It is largely due to the ANC's decision that women must be equally represented in all public institutions that currently more than 45% of the seats in parliament are held by women. In apartheid South Africa, fewer than 3% of MPs were women.

The ANC has given effect to its policy to have no less than 50% women representation in all decision-making structures. Our task now is to ensure that representation translates into meaningful and positive change in the lives of all women.



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In a democratic South Africa, women are no longer second class citizens.

Over the last 30 years, South Africa's young people have benefited from our transformative programmes, a vital part of our work to build a nation of skilled, informed and resilient young people. Young people have played a vital role in shaping the democratic social order we have today.

Our nation has benefitted immensely from the creative energies of the youth. Their campaigns and advocacy on issues such as education, entrepreneurship, health, economic development, disability, research and innovation, democratisation, environment, LGBTQI+, international solidarity and governance, have repeatedly pushed us to rethink our policies and ways of doing things.

The social agency of the youth also finds dramatic expression in sport, the arts and cultural industries. From the rise of Kwaito music in the early 1990s as the foremost platform of youthful social expression to the prominence of Amapiano on the global music scene today. Our artists have also excelled in film, sports, writing and literature, performance arts, comedy, videography and other genres of art.

Our country will continue to rely on the youth to reimagine the future and rejuvenate our nation.

The ANC-led government is investing enormous effort and resources to stimulate, transform and grow our economy so that it can create jobs, grow new and old industries, and create business opportunities for millions of young men and women who are hardest hit by the scourge of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

The provision of housing to millions of South Africans is one of the great achievements of our nation. Through the provision of houses, subsidies and serviced sites, government has managed to provide 4.7 million homes. Nearly two million women are now the proud owners of state



houses. Under apartheid, all women were denied the right to benefit from state housing and black women could not own land or houses.

Eighty nine percent of households now have access to water, while 85% of South African homes have access to mains electricity. This reduces the household burden on women and girls, who no longer spend hours fetching wood and water.

The ANC has done a lot to tackle poverty head-on. Over the last 30 years, our approach has been two-pronged: firstly, through the social wage, which involves a range of social and economic interventions, including expanding access to quality basic services, and, secondly, through direct transfers to households in the form of social grants.

One of the most direct actions by our government has been the provision of an effective social security net. In 1999 only 2.5 million people had access to social relief. Today, more than 18 million people in our country receive grants. The Social Relief of Distress Grant, introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide relief to unemployed people, lays the basis for a future Basic Income Grant.

The ANC-led government has dramatically improved access to education, from early childhood right through to post-school education. Nearly every young person aged 15-24 years is literate, and adult literacy now stands at 85%, up from only 64% in 1996.

Under apartheid, the law prevented black people from entering skilled occupations. Today we have a growing black and skilled professional sector.

Many interventions have been introduced, including school fee exemption, the school nutrition programme and scholar transport, to ensure poverty does not stand in the way of children's access to quality education.

Our work in promoting universal access to quality healthcare has made a tremendous impact. This includes free access to health care for preg-



nant women and children under 5 years to reduce infant and maternal mortality, and sustained investment in the building of healthcare facilities in even the most remote areas of our country.

Accordingly, life expectancy has progressively improved. This improvement is related to advances we made in, among others, the rollout of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS programme, with more than 5.8 million people on antiretroviral treatment, and steady progress in the fight against TB. Similarly, the success in curbing mother-to-child transmission of HIV, together with our child support grants, has helped reduce the rate of infant mortality.

As part of the achievement of universal and equitable access to healthcare we spent significant time and effort over the past three decades to establish for a system of universal health insurance. This work has culminated in the passing by Parliament in 2023 of the National Health Insurance Bill as the surest way to equitably distribute access to healthcare in our country.

Despite persistent challenges, the South African economy has expanded over the past 30 years.

The number of South Africans in employment increased from 8 million in 1994 to 16.7 million now.

The ANC-led government put in place policies and laws that have enabled farmers and agribusinesses to build a resilient, competitive and inclusive agriculture and food system. South Africa's agriculture and food strategy has been premised on bringing new aspirant black farmers to create an inclusive and stable sector; securing new trade agreements to expand production and generate foreign earnings; and balancing the introduction of technologies with job creation to safeguard employment. Because of these strategic interventions in agriculture, the value of South African agricultural output more than doubled between 1994 and 2023, and employment in the sector is currently at its highest level since 1994.



Dispossession, exclusion and marginalisation of the black majority was the key feature of the South African economy for more than 350 years. The ANC is determined to change the economy to ensure that reconstruction, growth and recovery leads to shared prosperity. The economic empowerment of the people through increased black participation in the ownership, management and control of the economy will be enhanced through deliberate interventions.

Since 1994 we have introduced the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, the minimum wage and legislation that entrenches collective bargaining and the rights of workers and trade unions.

Across the world, there are few governments that have done as much as the ANC-led government in extending basic services and providing social protection and a social wage to the working class, women and youth, the urban and rural masses, as well as the middle strata.

We must celebrate these achievements and ensure that the gains of freedom realised through our progressive social policy are defended and advanced further in the decade ahead.

The ANC has remained loyal to the pursuit of the National Democratic Revolution and the agenda for Africa's Renaissance. There have been missteps and mistakes, as is the case in any complex social transformation process, but all our programmes, initiatives and actions are aimed at transforming South Africa to eradicate the stubborn legacy of apartheid, patriarchy and colonialism.

We shall never betray the vision espoused in the Freedom Charter.

THE ONSLAUGHT AGAINST THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

The fundamental question for this year, the 30th anniversary of our freedom, is whether South Africa's transformation from an apartheid, colonial, patriarchal and divided past may be halted or reversed, or



whether the democratic renewal, national rejuvenation and socio-economic transformation agenda shall gain new impetus.

We know that there are social and political forces that are working hard to undermine the gains of freedom made over the last three decades. They want to stop the march towards a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous country that truly belongs to all.

The anti-transformation forces are converging into pacts, while at the same time seeking to fragment the forces for change through splinter groups and small parties that will contest the ANC.

Another anti-transformation tactic is to ensure that the ANC is locked up in internal struggles that will weaken and destroy it from within. They actively encourage rebel break-away groupings to erode the support base of the ANC. Often these start as factional conflicts within the ANC, but when the movement pushes ahead with its renewal, they mutate into opposition parties that are as opposed to the ANC as the right-wing opponents of transformation.

Some of these parties masquerade as more radical than the ANC, but their revolutionary-sounding rhetoric cannot hide the reality that they have common cause with the forces opposing transformation.

The shared goal of all these forces is to deprive the ANC of the ability to use state power to effect change.

The ANC-led Alliance and the broad progressive movement remains the only reliable force that is capable, and that has a tradition, of uniting and working with various social forces to advance the national democratic agenda. Unique among political formation in South Africa, the ANC has been able to work with workers, women, youth, progressive professionals, intellectuals, business people, middle-strata, faith-based organisations, cultural activists, traditional leaders, and various community-based and non-governmental organisations to achieve social and economic change.



This is not the first time in our history that parties representing seemingly contradictory interests have united in common cause to impose or defend racial privilege. A century ago the National Party and the South African Labour Party came together in the Pact Government after the 1924 general election. This resulted in, among others, the Native Representation, Native Trust and Land and the Native Urban Areas Amendment Bills – respectively abolishing the Cape qualified franchise, introducing native reserves, and prohibiting black people from acquiring land in urban areas.

The onslaught against transformation should make us more determined this year to succeed in building a better life for all and to be more deliberate and resolute about the renewal of the ANC, the broad democratic forces and our society.

TASKS FOR 2024

The National Executive Committee has decided that the six tasks announced in the 2023 January 8th Statement should remain the focus of our movement in 2024.

Given that our country will hold its seventh National and Provincial Elections in 2024, our over-arching priority is to work for a decisive ANC election victory so that it may to obtain a clear mandate to continue the transformation of our country.

Winning a decisive victory in 2024 Elections

The ANC is ready to launch a formidable campaign that will engage with citizens and every sector of society to seek a decisive mandate from the people to continue advancing the transformation project.

The ANC's role in working with the people to liberate South Africa from the yoke of apartheid and to vastly improve the lives of millions over the last 30 years cannot be matched by any other party. No other party has both a clear vision for a better more equal society and the capability to



achieve it.

The ANC remains the party of choice for all who seek to build a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

The frustrating experience of dysfunctional coalition governments has shown that they don't work for the people but for the political deal-makers intent on advancing their own personal interests. Service delivery suffers while the development agenda grinds to a halt. Replicating this bitter experience of chaos, instability and dysfunctionality at national and provincial levels will be a disaster that our country cannot afford.

It is therefore imperative that the progressive forces, led by the ANC, campaign for a clear majority to ensure stability and sustained progress in our country.

We call on all ANC members and supporters to go to every farm, village and township, to every town, city and suburb to account to the people as we seek a renewed democratic mandate to defend and advance the gains of three decades of freedom.

The ANC will launch its Election Manifesto next month setting out in detail our vision and programme for taking our country forward during the next five years, and beyond.

The immediate task of all members and supporters of the ANC, our Alliance partners, the mass democratic movement and progressive civil society is to mobilise all South Africans, especially the youth, to register to vote so they can exercise their hard-won right to shape the future of our country. The IEC will hold the next voter registration weekend on 3 and 4 February 2024.

Intensifying the renewal of the ANC

Our 53rd National Conference defined the principle objective of renewal as *“building the ANC’s resilience, enhancing its transformative and gov-*



ernance capacity and its ability to adapt to changing situations so that it can continue to serve and lead the people”.

For this reason, the 54th National Conference concluded that organisational renewal is *“an absolute and urgent priority, and we may go as far as to say, to the survival of our great movement”.*

The 55th National Conference also said that renewal must include the renewal of the Alliance, the broad progressive movement and the democratic state, to advance the interests of the working class and other motive forces, through targeted programmes focused on health, education, social security, human settlements and land reform.

Our 2017 Strategy and Tactics demands constant vigilance to ensure that our internal weaknesses do not result in a situation where the masses of the people, by omission or commission, precipitate electoral outcomes that place in power those forces who seek stealthily and deceitfully to undermine the progressive realisation of a National Democratic Society.

Central to our renewal project is building the capacity of the ANC to lead meaningful social and economic transformation. The ownership, management and control of our economy and the distribution of economic opportunities continue to retain a racial, gender and geographic concentration.

The NEC has directed the newly-established ANC Renewal Commission to develop a comprehensive renewal programme of action in 2024.

The five key elements of our renewal programme are:

Firstly, renewal is about the quality of an organisation: the calibre of its membership, cadreship and leadership. This was stressed President Oliver Tambo in the 1985 January 8th Statement: *“The strength of any organisation lies in the calibre of its individual members and units. In order to advance in keeping with the momentum of our struggle we must*



improve the quality of and expand the quantity of our membership. We need cadres of unquestionable loyalty, dedication and understanding of our struggle”.

Accordingly, the NEC has decided that, from 2024, all ANC members, including those in leadership structures such as the NEC, PECs, RECs and BECs, will be required to complete a comprehensive Foundation Course as part of the revival of a nation-wide political education programme.

In addition, the NEC has directed that a comprehensive Branch Functionality Audit guide the building of strong and vibrant ANC branches that are dynamically connected to the social life and developmental aspirations of their communities.

We call upon the ANC Women’s League, Youth League and Veterans Leagues, who held successful national conferences last year, to make a meaningful contribution to the life of the ANC and address issues affecting women and young people.

We commit ourselves working with our Alliance partners, the SA Communist Party (SACP), Congress of SA Trade Unions (COSATU) and the SA National Civic Organisation (SANCO), to ensure the strategic repositioning of the Alliance.

We also look forward to the contribution of a united and renewed civic movement following SANCO’s successful national conference at the end of last year.

The second element of renewal deals with the ANC member. Effective renewal means that we must raise the intellectual capacity and enhance the moral and ethical orientation of the membership. The living embodiment of a renewed ANC will be members who show exemplary conduct in society by upholding the core values and principles of the ANC.



We call on ANC members to also in their own capacity to engage in the battle of ideas and espouse progressive ideas and values, consistent with our vision of a better and more just society and world.

We call upon ANC structures to mobilise all South Africans in a campaign to combat the demons of racism, tribalism, ethnic chauvinism and related intolerances in our country and organisation. In line with the warning by one of our founding fathers and ANC President, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, that *“these divisions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our woes and of all our backwardness and ignorance today”*.

The third element of renewal is about instilling discipline and respect for organisational processes and principles.

The ANC is committed to developing and, where necessary, correcting its members and leaders. However, as renewal gains momentum those whose conduct is in conflict with our values and principles - the criminals, the corrupt, the careerists and factionalists, and those who actively work against the organisation – will find themselves outside the ANC.

There will be no compromise on the fundamental matters of organisational discipline and integrity.

The fourth element of renewal deals with the quality of our leaders and public representatives. The NEC has appointed an ANC Electoral Committee and adopted stringent and transparent rules and guidelines for electing leaders and selecting candidates to be public representatives. All leaders and public representatives, once elected, must be held accountable through the rigorous monitoring and evaluation system adopted by the NEC.

Reconstructing our economy to create more jobs and growth

A prosperous society is one where people’s lives are better, where they flourish and are happy. Whilst prosperity is often measured in economic terms, the ANC sees it in broader terms.



A prosperous people are free from poverty and the ANC government has done tremendous work over the last 30 years to promote economic empowerment and worker rights to a decent wage and collective bargaining.

The ANC remains committed to protecting collective bargaining and all worker rights.

The prosperity we seek requires that we transform the structure of the economy to ensure a more equitable distribution of wealth and control of our national economic assets.

Laws such as the Employment Equity Act and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act have enabled both women and men greater access to employment, business and investment opportunities.

Land dispossession, exclusion and marginalisation of the black majority was the central characteristic of the South African economy for more than 350 years.

What the ANC government has done over the last 30 years to transform and rebuild the economy is significant.

But more must still be done.

This ANC-government will continue our work to ensure that social and economic advancement of women is deepened and becomes an even more deliberate feature of all our work – from the redistribution of land to the provision of housing, from access to public employment programmes to the provision of higher education funding.

We must do more to change sexist attitudes and end all forms of harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

We call on the private sector to ensure that women receive equal pay for work of equal value and adopt policies to advance women-owned



businesses through their supply chains and through all their training and enterprise development programmes.

We welcome the fact that the Preferential Procurement Bill with set asides for women, youth and persons with disabilities has now been passed by the National Assembly.

Despite the progress made in rebuilding and transforming the economy in the wake of apartheid, for more than a decade the economy has been characterised by low growth and higher levels of unemployment. This has been compounded by the effects of the most severe global pandemic in more than a century. Within the space of just a few months in 2020, our economy lost around 2 million jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yet in the midst of severe load shedding and increased global volatility, the economy has been resilient and is now larger than it was before the pandemic. Over the last two years, the number of people with jobs has increased, bringing the level of employment to its pre-pandemic level and creating an additional 300,000 jobs.

Every family wants their daughters and sons to look forward to productive and prosperous lives. Today, there are 5.7 million young people under the age of 34 years in employment. However, too many young people are not in employment, education or training.

The Presidential Employment Stimulus has created over 1.2 million work and livelihood opportunities since its establishment, representing the largest expansion of public employment in South Africa's history.

In addition, over 4 million young people have registered on the SAYouth online platform, and more than 1 million of these have been able to access opportunities for learning and earning.

But there is still more we can and must do. South Africa is blessed with rich natural resources. Yet too many of our natural resources are



still exported in raw form, and then imported back into South Africa as manufactured goods.

The jobs and profits involved in manufacturing these goods are passed on to other countries, yet we need these here in South Africa. Our manifesto will outline industrial policy measures to ensure more of what is consumed by us is produced by us, and enable us to benefit from new growth areas such as the fourth industrial revolution and the green economy.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) can be a game-changer for industrialisation and development across the continent. By promoting industrialisation and trade among African countries, more of what is consumed on the continent can be produced on the continent. The AfCFTA also opens significant opportunities for South African entrepreneurs to expand their exports of manufactured goods to other African countries.

None of these growth measures can become a reality as long as our logistics infrastructure constrains trade. The ANC welcomes measures to bring new investors to upgrade our ports and rail network and the adoption of the Freight Logistics Roadmap late last year.

The establishment of the National Logistics Crisis Committee enables all role players, including state owned enterprises and the private sector, to focus on resolving the immediate problem of port, rail and road congestion.

The ANC directs our deployees in government to spare no effort in managing a speedy resolution to this crisis and communicating on progress to the public.

Improving Basic Services and Infrastructure

The implementation of infrastructure projects is stimulating economic activity and providing the infrastructure necessary for the growth of our



economy and meeting the needs of the people, including in areas such as human settlements, road and rail, rural bridges, water and sanitation.

At the same time, the inherited backlog, a growing and urbanising population, corruption and poor state capacity and coordination has led to many communities suffering sewer spillages, lack of water, power cuts, refuse not being removed and other service delivery challenges.

In 2023, we put in place a monitoring, evaluation and intervention system to ensure swift and responsive attention to the issues raised by communities, as well as addressing the challenges faced by local government.

In 2024, we must continue to address service delivery and infrastructure challenges.

This means that every ANC branch must continue to work in its community, and with School Governing Bodies, ward committees, Community Policing Forums and community organisations to ensure problems of service delivery are attended to swiftly and sustainably.

Government departments at all levels must plan, budget and implement together through the District Development Model to ensure co-ordinated action and sustained interventions, and that service delivery and infrastructure challenges are addressed.

Every ANC branch must mobilise to protect public institutions like schools, libraries and clinics, electricity infrastructure, railways, roads and bridges from vandalism and destruction.

Every public servant must, in the spirit of Batho Pele, work hard, be ethical and competent and put the people first so that we enhance the performance of state institutions. We will engage public service unions to work together so that we build a developmental and ethical state.



The ANC government will ensure that competent and ethical professionals be appointed to the public service on merit, be given space to do their job and account on transformation and developmental objectives.

Our local governments will focus on their key responsibility of providing services to promote social and economic development and create a safe and healthy environment in partnership with communities, local businesses and civil society.

Combating gender-based violence and building the family

To defend and advance our freedom and successfully build a cohesive nation this year we must combat gender-based violence and promote the family as a basic unit of society.

Every ANC member must take every opportunity to speak out against a toxic masculinity that enables men to abuse women and children and abandon their family responsibilities.

ANC branches must work with community-based organisations to ensure no family turns a blind eye to gender-based violence.

All ANC structures must emulate the ANC Women's League in their excellent campaign to ensure culprits of femicide, child abuse and rape are arrested, denied bail and face the full might of the law.

In schools, clinics, in faith based organisations and in society at large, we must work to prevent young women becoming mothers before they have finished their own education and childhoods.

We call on both ANC branches and our government institutions to actively strengthen the role of the family in supporting both young and old. Special attention must be given to ensuring parents understand their roles and responsibilities in raising their children.



ANC branches must work with every household to ensure all children attend schooling from pre-school, and actively work with the education system and parents to prevent school drop-outs.

As part of a caring organisation that respects the fundamental human rights of all people, ANC members should always be in the forefront of advocating for the rights of persons with disability, persons living with albinism the LGBTQI+ community and other groups subjected to prejudice and discrimination.

Resolving the energy crisis and ending loadshedding

The work that has been done over the last year in implementing the Energy Action Plan has given us greater confidence that we will bring load shedding to an end.

Although we still experience interruptions in electricity supply, the overall trend is towards less severe load shedding and better management and communication of outages. The regulatory reforms we have initiated have enabled a massive increase in investment in electricity generation. Attention is now being given to expansion of investment in additional transmission grid capacity.

In the short term, we continue to call upon all South Africans to use electricity sparingly and to reduce their overall consumption of electricity.

ANC branches must also campaign to ensure communities pay for services used, and support programmes to introduce pay-as-you-go meters and disconnect illegal electricity and water connections.

Strengthening the fight against crime and corruption

Crime undermines and erodes the gains of freedom and shared prosperity. Recognising the severity of the problem is the first step. Crime in South Africa is well organised and deeply entrenched across a range of social and economic sectors. Effective crime fighting requires integra-



tion between crime intelligence, detective work, law enforcement, community mobilisation and public prosecution.

The ANC welcomes steps that have already been taken to put 20 000 more police personnel on the streets and to improve the capacity of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and courts to ensure perpetrators are brought to justice.

We also welcome the establishment of specialised units and the recent work of Operation Shanela to target illegal mining and other priority crimes.

Empowering communities through Community Policing Forums (CPFs) is fundamentally important if we are to succeed to defeat crime and corruption. By fostering collaboration between citizens and law enforcement agencies, these forums play a vital role in preventing crime, promoting public safety and building trust in the justice system.

The NEC has instructed our deployees in government to ensure the police service is more responsive to crime issues in communities raised by CPFs so that we avoid vigilante actions by disgruntled residents. ANC branches must continue to play a leadership role in establishing and supporting CPFs.

To ensure that our government has a more integrated approach to crime fighting, which includes the effective use of crime intelligence, law enforcement and successful public prosecution, the ANC manifesto will focus on the necessary measures to combat lawlessness and criminality.

We will also focus on cross-border security issues, such as human trafficking, drug smuggling and other illicit trade. We have continued with initiatives to improve our border security and to strictly enforce immigration law.

The Border Management Agency, working with other law enforcement and intelligence agencies, is seized with the task of monitoring our bor-



ders to ensure security and the lawful passage of documented persons in and out of South Africa. Government has put out for public comment the White Paper on Immigration to improve the legal instruments we have at our disposal to respond to problems of illegal immigration.

Corruption in government, business and society is criminal activity. It detracts from government's ability to improve the conditions of those living in poverty and to transform society. Corruption is counter-revolutionary. We disassociate ourselves from those who are corrupt, commit serious crimes, abuse women and children and are involved in sexual harassment.

The ANC welcomes progress in renewing anti-corruption agencies. More effort must be made by prosecuting authorities to ensure that in cases presented to the courts evidence is properly prepared in advance.

Building a better Africa and a just, equitable and more humane world

Today progressive people across the world stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine. We condemn in the strongest terms the appalling slaughter by the Israeli government of more than 22 000 Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

The ANC has always stood side by side with the Palestinian people in their struggle for self-determination because, like we were before 1994, they too are faced with a brutal apartheid regime. President Nelson Mandela famously declared that our own freedom as South Africa was incomplete without the freedom of Palestine.

As South Africans living in a free and democratic society we tremble with indignation as we witness the injustice against the people of Palestine.

The ongoing genocide in Palestine has led us to take the extraordinary step of submitting a case to the International Court of Justice.



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We recall that 30 years ago, in 1994 as South Africa was preparing to hold our first democratic elections, one million Africans were killed in the genocide that unfolded in Rwanda while the world looked on with indifference. In the words of President Mandela, “never, never and never again” must this be allowed to happen.

Today we reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire in the assault on Gaza; the opening of corridors so that humanitarian assistance can reach those in dire need; the release of hostages and political prisoners; and the settlement of the conflict based on the two- state solution, in terms of the 1967 borders.

We remain vocal on matters pertaining to those oppressed and marginalised throughout the world. Accordingly we have solidly continued to support the peoples of Cuba and Western Sahara in their struggles.

The multiple global crises and risks we spoke of earlier cannot be resolved through a unipolar world dominated by the Global North or by armed conflict.

Developing countries and progressive forces, through platforms such as the Non-Aligned Movement, BRICS, the G77 plus China and other global platforms, are pushing for a more inclusive, equitable and balanced global order that will guarantee humanity’s collective survival and success, buttressed by strong multilateral collaboration and international solidarity.

South Africa participated with sister African countries in a peace mission to Ukraine and Russia, informed by our conviction that all conflicts should be resolved through dialogue.

We will continue to play an active role in Africa’s renewal and development agenda. We are a trusted partner in conflict resolution and peace missions across the continent, in countries such as Sudan, South Sudan, the DRC and Mozambique.



Working with other national liberation movements and progressive parties in the continent, the ANC will continue to make its contribution towards peace and development of the African Continent.

At COP 28 in Dubai last year, South Africa, together with other countries on the African continent, contributed to a balanced consensus which will assist our continent build climate resilience and benefit from the move towards a low carbon economy at a pace our country can afford and in a manner that is just and leaves no one behind.

During 2024, progressive and peace-loving South Africans must therefore continue to stand in solidarity with the peoples of Palestine, Cuba, Western Sahara and Eswatini. ANC branches and structures must educate and activate members and communities on the importance of solidarity.

We remain resolute in advancing the African Agenda 2063 to build a peaceful, united and prosperous continent. We will continue to work to advance industrialisation, intra-African trade, food and water security, and infrastructural development. In the words of former President Thabo Mbeki:

*“Whatever the setbacks of the moment, nothing can stop us now!
Whatever the difficulties, Africa shall be at peace!
However improbable it may sound to the sceptics, Africa will prosper!”*

ANNIVERSARIES

During 2024, we will commemorate the centenary of the birth of Elias Mathope Motsoaledi (26 July 1924 – 9 May 1994). An embodiment of the different pillars and components of our struggle, he was active in the Communist Party and the ANC, a founding member of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and Umkhonto we Sizwe. He was sentenced to life imprisonment at the Rivonia Trial in 1964, released in 1989 and elected to the ANC NEC in 1991.



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It is important for the renewal of our movement to be grounded in its history, traditions and values. We draw lessons and inspiration from the following significant anniversaries taking place this year:

- 80 years since the formation of the ANC Youth League on 2 April 1944 by amongst others Anton Lembede, Nelson Mandela, Ashby Mda and Oliver Tambo. Successive generations have carried out the twin tasks of the League: to unite and lead young men and women in confronting and dealing with the problems that face the youth and to ensure that the youth make a full and rich contribution to the work of the ANC and the life of the nation.
- 70 years since the formation of the Federation of South African Women (Fedsaw) on 17 April 1954 by amongst others Ray Alexander, Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph and Amina Cachalia and the adoption of the 1954 Women's Charter.
- 65 years since the 1959 potato boycott against against slave-like conditions of potato labourers in Bethal, Mpumalanga. Leaders of the movement included Gert Sibande ("The Lion of the East") and Ruth First.
- 60 years since Nelson Mandela delivered his speech from the dock at the Rivonia Trial on 20 April 1964 in which he stated: *"I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal for which I hope to live and to see realised. But, My Lord, if it needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."*
- 60 years since the execution of Vuyisile Mini, Wilson Khayinga and Zinakile Mhlaba, members of the ANC, SACTU and the Eastern Cape Command of Umkhonto we Sizwe, on 6 November 1964.
- 55 years since the historic ANC Consultative Conference in Morogoro, which played a crucial role in the renewal of the ANC, which adopted the 1969 Strategy and Tactics and which opened membership of the ANC to all races.



- 45 years since the formation of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) on 31 May 1979, mobilising students under the slogan “Each One, Teach One”.
- 40 years since the assassination of Jeanette Schoon and her daughter Katryn, on 28 June 1984 in Lubango, Angola by a parcel bomb sent by the apartheid regime.
- 40 years since United Democratic Front mobilised the people against attempts by the apartheid regime to divide and rule by co-opting coloured and Indian voters through the Tricameral Parliament Elections held on 22 August 1984.
- 35 years since the release of Rivonia Trialists Ahmed Kathrada, Raymond Mhlaba, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoaledi and Walter Sisulu along with Wilton Mkwayi and Oscar Mpetha.
- 35 years since the Conference for a Democratic Future on 10 November 1989 brought together the Mass Democratic Movement in support for the strategic perspectives contained in the Harare Declaration.
- 30 years since one million Africans were killed in the genocide that unfolded in Rwanda while the world looked on with indifference.
- 30 years since our first democratic elections on 27 April 1994.

During 2023 we dipped our revolutionary banner in honour of the memory of Comrades Mosie Moola, Pule Thathe, Stephanie Kemp, Mbulelo Musi, Lawrence Khuzwayo, Tiego Moseneke, Chris Mathako, Blanche La Guma, Essop Pahad, Marhooma Khatija Cachalia, Noganiwe “Antie” Nyathela, Junaid Pahad, Sally Motlana, Tina Joemat-Pettersson, Amos and Betty Gumede, Sello Molibeli, Zoliswa Funiselo, Mluleki Aubrey Mali, Ntombizodwa Dorris Sikhosana, Billy Masetlha, Joe Mpsisi, David Niddrie, Blanco Mabaso, Mogolodi “Corra” Dikgacwi, Klaas de Jonge, Buyiswa Nomngcayi-Bulawa, Harry Belafonte, Kiernan “AKA” Forbes, Matshidiso Segale, Paul Lekgwape, Regina Pelonomi Mahne,



Sally Keboneope Khono Senna, Nombulelo Tyawa, Teboho Moseling Mahlatsi, Micere Githae Mugo, Dikago Pule, Themba Wilson Sidima, Thabo Mabasa, Farooq Meer, Kallie Hanekom, Mfanelo Ndlela, Thembi Mmoko, Mabhungu Mkhize, Jick Kgoleng, Vuyisile Skei, Amy Thornton, Zeph Makgetla, Important Mkhize, Matshidiso Segale, Paul Lekgwape, Regina Pelonomi Mahne, Julian Bahula, Aziz Pahad, Zoleka Mandela, Andrew Ragavaloo, Lydia Komape Ngwenya, Herbert “Tau” Bhoya, Shadrack Gutto, Lesibana Mpepele, Ina Cronje, Ndoyisile (Mandoyi) Tshandu, Joshua “Joe” Dikeme Makgothlo, Thandeka Gule, Luwellan Landers, Ruskin Nkondo, Bulelwa “Zahara” Mkutukana, Alice Mthembu, Peter Magubane, Mxolisi Faku, Mbongeni Ngema and Siphwe Doctor Msibi.

THEME OF THE YEAR

The achievement of freedom and the democratic gains made should neither be taken for granted nor diminished. There was “no easy walk to freedom” and “freedom was not free”. Millions of people suffered, struggled and sacrificed enormously so that our country can achieve freedom, peace and democracy.

It is for this reason that today we echo the words of Nelson Mandela, the founding President of democratic South Africa, who boldly pronounced during his inauguration in 1994: *“Let freedom reign. The sun shall never set on so glorious a human achievement”*.

Deepening democracy and fast-tracking fundamental socio-economic transformation is the best way to defend and advance freedom.

Accordingly, we dedicate the 112th anniversary of the ANC to the defence and advancement of the gains of freedom and to the intensification of the struggle for a better life for all. We therefore declare 2024 to be:

THE YEAR OF UNITED ACTION TO DEFEND OUR FREEDOM AND ADVANCE A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL: FORWARD TO A DECISIVE VICTORY!

Published by the African National Congress
Chief Albert Luthuli House, 54 Pixley ka Seme Street
Johannesburg, 2000. Tel: 011 376 1000.
Website: www.anc1912.org.za
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Produced by the ANC Department of Communications, Information & Publicity

