



ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the
President

BUILDING A NATION THAT WORKS FOR ALL

State of the Nation Address

By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

WE gather here as our country is mourning the tragic and devastating loss of 14 South African soldiers who were part of a mission to bring peace to the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We bow our heads in tribute to:

- Staff Sergeant William Eddie Cola
- Staff Sergeant Molahlehi Ishmael Molahlehi
- Staff Sergeant Shwahlane Theophilus Seepe
- Corporal Matome Justice Malesa
- Corporal Rinae Nemavhulani
- Lance Bombardier Itumeleng Macdonald Moreo
- Lance Corporal Tseke Moffat Molapo
- Lance Corporal Metse Stansly Raswiswi
- Rifleman Sebatane Richard Chokoe

- Rifleman Derrick Maluleke
- Rifleman Tshidiso Andries Mabele
- Rifleman Calvin Louis Moagi
- Rifleman Mokete Joseph Mobe
- Private Peter Jacobus Strydom.

Alongside soldiers from other Southern African countries, they lost their lives in defence of the fundamental right of the Congolese people to live in peace and security.

They lost their lives not in the pursuit of resources or territory or power. They lost their lives so that the guns on our continent may be forever silenced.

We salute our gallant soldiers.

This State of the Nation Address is taking place as we celebrate 70 years since the adoption of

the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People in Kliptown.

The Freedom Charter is the cornerstone of our democratic Constitution.

It sets out a vision of a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

It sets out a vision of a country in which government is founded on the will of the people,

where the land is shared among those who work it,

where the people share in the country's wealth, and all are equal before the law.

It is this vision that continues to guide us as we work to build the nation we all want.

It is the spirit of the Congress of

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the People that inspires us as we prepare for a National Dialogue in which South Africans are once again called upon to chart a new path for our country.

We must chart this path in a world that is rapidly changing.

It is a world of both interdependence and competition, of cooperation and conflict.

It is a multipolar world in which new countries are emerging to play a greater role in global affairs.

We are seeing intensifying competition over trade, technology and influence in global institutions.

There are global fundamental shifts underway that affect every aspect of human life.

From the growing impact of climate change to rapid advances in artificial intelligence, geopolitical tensions and violent conflicts.

In the face of these challenges, we are witnessing the rise of nationalism and protectionism, the pursuit of narrow interests and the decline of common cause.

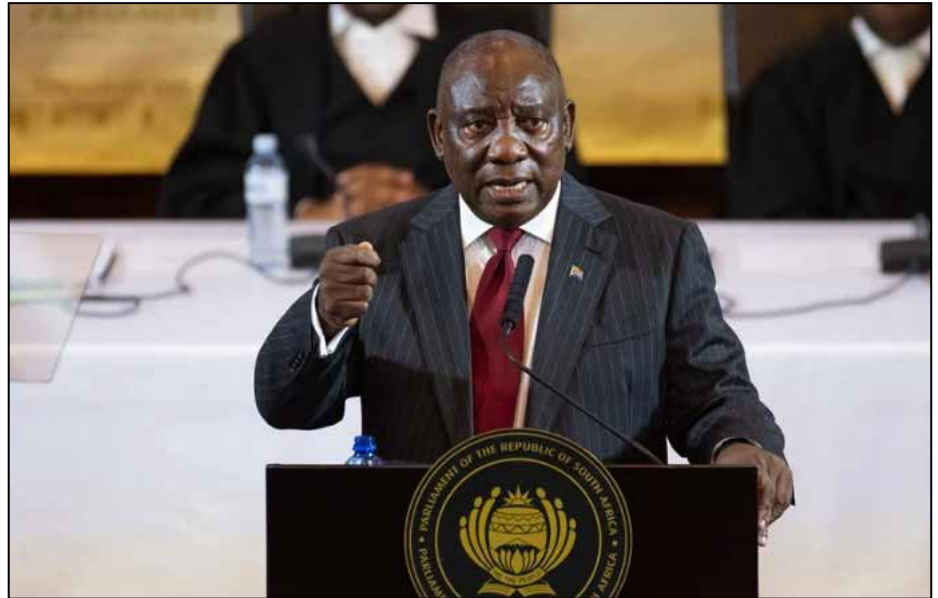
This is the world that we, as a developing economy, must now navigate.

But we are not daunted. We will not be deterred.

We are a resilient people. We will not be bullied.

We will stand together as a united nation.

We will speak with one voice in defence of our national interest, our sovereignty and our constitutional democracy.



By staying true to our values, by harnessing our unique strengths and endowments, and by forging a common purpose, we can turn these trying circumstances to our advantage and propel our country forward.

As South Africans, we stand for peace and justice, for equality and solidarity.

We stand for non-racialism and democracy, for tolerance and compassion.

We stand for equal rights for women, for persons with disability and for members of the LGBTQI+ community

We stand for our shared humanity, not for the survival of the fittest.

So, this evening, let us speak of the nation we want.

And let us speak of the work we must do – and the work we are doing – to build that nation.

We want a nation united in its diversity.

At many difficult moments in our

past, we worked together towards a common goal.

Through partnership, we brought peace and democracy to our country.

We overcame apartheid, a crime against humanity that denied people their human rights, that deprived them of their land and livelihoods, that sought to strip them of their dignity.

Through partnership, we overcame a devastating pandemic and rebuilt our country in the wake of state capture.

Together, we have built durable institutions that support our democracy, protect our fundamental rights and promote the well-being of South Africans.

We have built meaningful partnerships between government and business, labour, civil society and other social partners to drive growth and development.

These stand as models of cooperation for the rest of the world.

South Africans are continuing to work together to confront our

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country's challenges and build a nation that works for all.

Guided by the wishes of the people as expressed in last year's elections, we have formed a Government of National Unity to give expression to our culture of cooperation.

As political parties, we have set aside our differences and agreed to work together for the good of all South Africans.

In the last week, we have adopted the Medium Term Development Plan, which sets out a clear and ambitious programme for the next five years.

The actions contained in the Medium Term Development Plan will advance our three strategic priorities:

Firstly, to drive inclusive growth and job creation.

Secondly, to reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living.

Thirdly, to build a capable, ethical and developmental state.

Our most urgent task is to grow our economy so that we can create jobs, reduce poverty and improve the lives of all South Africans.

To undertake this task, we need a government that works for the people.

We need a state that is capable and competent, underpinned by a professional public service.

South Africans want a state that treats all people with dignity, humility and respect.

A state with leaders who are pre-

pared to serve our people with complete dedication, and public servants who are ethical, skilled and properly qualified.

To achieve these objectives we are strengthening the role of the Public Service Commission in the appointment of the key people who direct the affairs of our state such as Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General, Chief Executive Officers of SOEs and board members and other senior positions.

We will introduce a graduate recruitment scheme so that we may attract the best and the brightest into the public service.

A capable state must start where people live and work.

In many cities and towns across the country, roads are not maintained, water and electricity supply is often disrupted, refuse is not collected and sewage runs in the streets.

In part this has happened because many municipalities lack the technical skills and resources required to meet people's needs.

Many municipalities have not invested the revenue they earn from these services into the upkeep of infrastructure.

Starting this year, we will work with our municipalities to establish professionally managed, ring-fenced utilities for water and electricity services to ensure that there is adequate investment and maintenance.

Many of the challenges in municipalities arise from the design of our local government system.

We will therefore undertake ex-

tensive consultation to develop an updated White Paper on Local Government to outline a modern and fit-for-purpose local government system.

We will review the funding model for municipalities as many of them do not have a viable and sustainable revenue base.

We will continue to work with traditional leaders in the implementation of local development programmes.

We will expand our support to municipalities that require assistance, drawing on the lessons of the Presidential eThekweni Working Group.

We are seeing great progress in eThekweni as we implement the district development model, which enables all key role players as in government, business, labour and community-based organisations to work together.

As we work to reform the public service and build the capability of the state, we will harness technology to transform the way that government works.

We will invest in digital public infrastructure to give South Africans access to government services anytime, anywhere, through a re-launched gov.za platform.

At the heart of this transformation will be the implementation of a digital identity system.

These measures will transform the relationship between citizens and government, and create one government that is accessible to every person at a touch.

We want a nation with a thriving economy that benefits all.

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To create this virtuous cycle of investment, growth and jobs, we must lift economic growth to above three percent.

To achieve higher levels of economic growth we are undertaking massive investment in new infrastructure while upgrading and maintaining the infrastructure we have.

We are developing innovative ways of funding infrastructure.

We are engaging local and international financial institutions and investors to unlock R 100 billion in infrastructure financing.

A project preparation bid window has been launched to fast track investment readiness.

This includes revised regulations for public private partnerships, which will unlock private sector expertise and funds.

Government will spend more than R940 billion on infrastructure over the next three years.

This includes R375 billion in spending by state owned companies.

This funding will revitalise our roads and bridges, build dams and waterways, modernise our ports and airports and power our economy.

Through the Infrastructure Fund, twelve blended finance projects worth nearly R38 billion have been approved in the last year.

These are projects in water and sanitation, student accommodation, transport, health and energy.

Construction of the Mtentu Bridge construction continues.



This bridge will rise above the river between Port Edward and Lusikisiki, and will become the tallest bridge in Africa.

The Polihlali Dam will feed 490 million cubic metres of water a year from the Lesotho Highlands into the Vaal River System, securing water supply to several provinces for years to come.

Working with international partners, we are revitalising small harbours, unlocking economic opportunities for coastal communities.

We are steadily removing the obstacles to meaningful and faster growth.

The economic reforms that we are implementing through Operation Vulindlela have created a new sense of optimism and confidence in our economy.

We have made progress in rebuilding and restructuring a number of our network industries.

We are seeing positive results in the improvement of the functioning of our network industries as well as the investment opportunities that are opening up and are being taken by investors leading

to job creation.

Working together with business, labour and other social partners we must now finish this work.

Over the coming year, we will initiate a second wave of reform to unleash more rapid and inclusive growth.

Our immediate focus is to enable Eskom, Transnet and other state-owned enterprises that are vital to our economy to function optimally.

We are repositioning these entities to provide world-class infrastructure while enabling competition in operations, whether in electricity generation, freight rail or port terminals.

We continue with the fundamental reform of our state owned enterprises to ensure that they can effectively fulfil their social and economic mandates.

This includes the work underway to put in place a new model to strengthen governance and oversight of public entities.

We will ensure public ownership of strategic infrastructure for public benefit while finding innovative

ways to attract private investment to improve services and ensure public revenue can be focused on the provision of public services.

We are in the process of establishing a dedicated SOE Reform Unit to coordinate this work.

The measures we have implemented through the Energy Action Plan have reduced the severity and frequency of load shedding, with more than 300 days without load shedding since March 2024.

While the return of load shedding for two days last week was a reminder that our energy supply is still constrained, we remain on a positive trajectory.

We now need to put the risk of load shedding behind us once and for all by completing the reform of our energy system to ensure long-term energy security.

The Electricity Regulation Amendment Act, which came into effect on the 1st of January, marks the beginning of a new era.

This year, we will put in place the building blocks of a competitive electricity market.

Over time, this will allow multiple electricity generation entities to emerge and compete.

We will mobilise private sector investment in our transmission network to connect more renewable energy to the grid.

As we reform our energy system, we are continuing to build successful multilateral partnerships in the global effort to halt the devastating impact of climate change.

Our Just Energy Transition is gaining momentum.

Over 13 billion US dollars have been pledged by the international community and significant private capital is being invested locally.

We are determined to meet our carbon reduction commitments, and will do so at a pace and scale that our country can afford.

We are revitalising our port terminals and rail corridors through the Freight Logistics Roadmap, leveraging private capital to restore them to world class standards.

Transnet's performance has stabilised and is steadily improving.

We released a Network Statement in December 2024 which, for the first time, will enable private rail operators to access the freight rail system

Open access to the rail network will allow train operating companies to increase the volume of goods transported by rail, while our network infrastructure remains state owned.

This will ensure that South African minerals, vehicles and agricultural produce reach international markets, securing jobs and earning much needed revenue for our fiscus.

New cranes and other port equipment are being commissioned to speed up the loading and unloading of cargo and reduce waiting times for ships in our ports.

As we forge ahead with the reform agenda, an urgent priority is to ensure a secure and reliable supply of water across the country.

Many people in our cities, towns and villages are experiencing more and more frequent water shortages as a result of failing water infrastructure.

It is impossible to live without water and it is impossible for the economy to grow without water.

We are therefore taking a series of decisive actions to resolve the water crisis, to enable our people to get water where they live, whether in townships or rural areas.

We are investing heavily in expanding our water resources.

To date, the Infrastructure Fund has secured R23 billion for seven large water infrastructure projects.

We have ended delays in major water infrastructure projects like Phase 2 of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project and the uMkhomazi Dam.

Work is underway to prepare for construction of the Ntabelanga Dam on the uMzimvubu River to supply additional water for domestic use and for irrigation in the Eastern Cape.

Within the next year, we will complete the establishment of the National Water Resource Infrastructure Agency to unlock much greater investment in water projects.

Through the Water Services Amendment Bill, we will introduce a licensing system for water service providers and remove licenses where providers do not meet the standards for quality drinking water.

As part of our reform agenda, we will continue to enhance our

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visa system to make it easier for skilled people to invest in our country and to grow tourism.

This year, we will launch an Electronic Travel Authorisation system to enable a secure, fully digital visa application process.

This system will use artificial intelligence and automation to reduce the scope for corruption and enable rapid turnaround times for tourist visas.

We have cleared over 90 percent of the backlog of more than 300,000 visa applications.

These changes send a strong message that South Africa is open for business and tourism.

We want a nation in which prosperity and opportunity is shared by all.

For many decades our economy has been held back by the exclusion of the vast majority of the South African people.

Black South Africans were deprived of land, of capital, of skills, of opportunities.

Our economy was starved of the potential of its people. And that is why we need to transform our economy and make it more inclusive.

That is why our focus is on empowering black people, women and persons with disabilities because they were deliberately excluded from playing a key role in the economy of their own country.

We will set up a transformation fund worth R20 billion a year over the next five years to fund black-owned and small business enterprises.

We will fast-track the regulations of the Public Procurement Act to ensure businesses owned by women, youth and persons with disabilities receive equitable opportunities in government contracts.

We will continue to provide training to women entrepreneurs to enable them to compete for government tenders.

In November last year, we launched the National Skills Fund Disabilities Programme.

In its first phase, this transformative initiative will empower over 10,000 persons with disabilities through tailored training programmes, stipends and specialised tools.

This part of the work we must undertake as business, government, labour and civil society to enable persons with disabilities to play an important part in the economy of our country.

Through these programmes, we

are not only righting a grave historical wrong.

We are unleashing the potential of our economy for sustained growth.

We want a nation where there is work for all.

Where every person can earn a decent living and realise their potential.

Where the rights of workers are protected and working conditions improved.

Where women and men receive equal pay for work of equal value.

We need to ensure that growth creates jobs for all, especially for young people.

The success of the Presidential Employment Stimulus shows how public employment programmes can create meaningful work that generates a wider benefit and contributes to sustainable employment.



“South Africans are continuing to work together to confront our country’s challenges and build a nation that works for all.”

*President Cyril Ramaphosa,
SONA 2025*

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The employment stimulus has created almost 2.2 million work and livelihood opportunities through innovative models that provide high-quality work to participants.

The Social Employment Fund has created over 80,000 jobs this year.

It has supported more than 12,000 participants to enter entrepreneurial activities.

During the past year, young people secured 235,000 work opportunities through the National Pathway Management Network, which is underpinned by the SAY-outh.mobi platform.

We now need to build on these innovative programmes to create jobs for youth at even greater scale.

To create jobs, we must leverage our unique strengths and our unrealised potential to build the industries of the future – green manufacturing, renewable energy, electric vehicles and the digital economy.

This year, we will finalise a modernised and comprehensive industrial policy that drives economic growth.

We will achieve this ambition by focusing on the opportunities in localisation, diversification, digitisation and decarbonisation.

We are working towards the full implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which will tear down the barriers to trade on our continent.

As the most industrialised economy in Africa, we are positioning ourselves to be at the centre of

this new and growing market.

We are harnessing the sun and the wind to make our country a leader in renewable energy and green manufacturing.

With an abundance of cheap, green energy, we can produce products that are competitive anywhere in the world and create hundreds of thousands of new jobs in the process.

We are making sustainable use of the rich abundance of the South African earth.

By supporting our farmers, improving our logistics network and rural supply chains, and opening new export markets for products we can significantly expand our agricultural sector.

We want South Africa to be leading in the commercial production of hemp and cannabis.

We are breathing new life into the mining industry, which remains one of our most important and valuable endowments.

We are on track to implement a new, modern and transparent mining rights system this year, which will unlock investment in exploration and production.

We will put in place an enabling policy and regulatory framework for critical minerals.

By beneficiating these minerals here in South Africa, we can make use of the extraordinary wealth that lies beneath our soil for the benefit of our people.

Even more valuable than our natural resources are the diversity, energy and talent of the South African people.

The services sector is now the largest part of our economy, ranging from financial services to retail, hospitality, tourism and the burgeoning creative industry.

The tourism sector is growing rapidly, with close to 9 million tourists having visited our country last year.

We will grow tourism through our visa reforms, through increasing the number of flights to key destinations, and through marketing South Africa as the best country in the world to visit.

We have also seen strong growth in digital services and business process outsourcing, which has created jobs for young people.

To support this growth, we are investing in skills development for the industries of the future.

The Jobs Boost fund has pioneered a new model that links funding for skills in demand to the successful placement and employment of young people.

We are expanding our support for small and medium enterprises and for the informal economy, which sustains millions of jobs and livelihoods across our country.

This includes streamlining funding for small businesses, unlocking venture capital for high-growth start-ups, and developing a regulatory environment that enables rather than restricts informal enterprises.

To build an innovative economy, the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation will establish an Innovation Fund to provide venture capital to tech start-ups that emerge from our higher education institutions.

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We are calling on business to use the SA Youth.mobi platform, which has some 4.5 million young people registered, for their hiring.

We are calling on business to support the Youth Employment Service and to scale-up workplace experience opportunities over the coming year.

We want a nation where no one goes hungry.

For 30 years, since the dawn of democracy, we have worked together to reduce poverty.

Today, we spend around 60 percent of our national budget on the social wage: on health, education, social protection, community development and public employment programmes.

More than 28 million unemployed and vulnerable people receive social grants.

More than 10.5 million learners go to public schools where they do not have to pay fees.

Last year, over 900,000 students from poor and working class backgrounds received funding to study at universities and colleges.

Through these programmes, we are alleviating the worst effects of poverty.

We are providing the means through which South Africans can rise above the poverty that has been passed down from one generation to the next.

But we have to do much more if we are to end poverty.

We must do much more to ensure that women in particular no



longer face a hopeless struggle to feed and clothe their children.

While government invests heavily to support poor and unemployed people, these programmes are fragmented and sometimes difficult to access.

We are therefore building an integrated system of support for poor and unemployed people.

We are strengthening existing programmes from job search support to public employment and making sure that together they provide people with pathways out of poverty.

Rather than expecting those in need to approach several government agencies separately, a citizen should be able to go to one place to receive all of the support that they need.

To protect the gains that we have made since 1994 in advancing children's rights, we will soon adopt the National Strategy to Accelerate Action for Children, which focuses on ten key priorities including poverty reduction, child protection and addressing malnutrition.

The Social Relief of Distress Grant is as an essential mechanism for alleviating extreme poverty.

We will use this grant as a basis for the introduction of a sustainable form of income support for unemployed people.

Central to our efforts to end poverty and to develop our economy is to provide decent, quality education to every young South African.

We are immensely proud of the achievements of the matric class of 2024, which achieved the highest past rate in our country's history.

Eighty-seven percent of learners who sat for their matric exams passed. For the first time in the history of our country, nearly half of these learners achieved a bachelor pass.

Nothing can diminish our pride in the hard work of these learners and the steady support of their teachers, parents and broader community.

Our immediate focus is to expand access to early childhood development for every child.

This will be achieved through registering and formalising existing ECD centres and ensuring that they have the facilities, training and material that they need to provide quality early learning.

We will focus on ensuring that every child can read for meaning in the foundation phase to set them up for success in later years.

To achieve this, we are implementing mother tongue based bilingual education to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes, and rolling out lesson plans, reading books and other interventions that have been proven to work.

The Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme will continue to prioritise students who want to pursue a teaching career in the Foundation Phase.

Last year, we signed the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act, which is pivotal for ensuring that education is accessible and inclusive for all South Africans.

This year, the Minister of Basic Education will introduce national policy, norms and standards and regulations to empower all partners in basic education to support the implementation of the Act.

To ensure that the economy has the skills it needs, we are increasing the production of artisans through TVET colleges.

This is part of the shift we are undertaking towards education and skills development that combines formal learning with job training.

Drawing on the models that have proved so successful in other countries, we call on the private sector to offer young people experiential learning opportunities while they undertake their studies.

We are implementing Phase 1 of the comprehensive student funding model for higher education to address the needs of the *“missing middle”*.

This will support approximately 10,000 students in the first year.

We want a nation in which there is quality health care for all.

This year, we will proceed with the preparatory work for the establishment of the NHI.

This includes developing the first phase of a single electronic health record, preparatory work to establish Ministerial Advisory Committees on health technologies and health care benefits, and an accreditation framework for health service providers.

The NHI will reduce inequalities in healthcare by ensuring everyone gets fair treatment.

The NHI will save many lives by providing a package of services that include, for example, maternal and newborn care and services for people living with HIV, those with TB, and those suffering from non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

Our most immediate priority is to strengthen the health system and improve the quality of care.

A vital part of this is the modernisation, improvement and maintenance of existing health facilities and construction of new hospitals and clinics.

A number of hospitals are under construction or undergoing revitalisation. These include the Limpopo Central Hospital and the Siloam District Hospital in Limpopo, the Dihlabeng Regional Hospital in Free State, the Bambisana District Hospital and Zithulele District Hospital in Eastern Cape, and the Bophelong Psychiatric Hospital in North West.

Other projects are at various stages of design and development. This includes the replacement of three existing old central hospitals, three new central hospitals, five new district hospitals, five community health centres and a new psychiatric hospital.

To improve patient experience, we are putting more emphasis on reducing waiting times, cleanliness and staff attitudes in public health facilities.

We are encouraged by the great progress the country has made towards ending HIV and AIDS as a public health threat.

By the end of March 2024, 96 percent of people living with HIV knew their status, 79 percent of these were on antiretroviral treatment and 94 percent of those on treatment were virally suppressed.

To ensure that we reach our target of 95-95-95, we will this year launch a massive campaign to look for an additional 1.1 million people who are not on treatment.

We are concerned about the potential impact of the decision by the United States government to suspend some of its funding for HIV and TB programmes in African countries for 90 days.

This funding accounts for about 17 percent of our country's HIV spend. We have been able to provide funding from our fiscus for our HIV and TB programmes over the years.

We are looking at various interventions to address the immediate needs and ensure the continuity of essential services.

To tackle inequality, we need to

undo apartheid spatial planning, which has scarred our cities and forced many people to live far from areas of work and opportunity.

We have delivered millions of housing opportunities since 1994, providing safety and dignity to poor households.

Yet the practice of building housing developments on the periphery of urban centres has perpetuated inequality and urban sprawl.

Going forward, we are going to build more housing in our city centres and closer to work and business opportunities.

We are redesigning our housing subsidies and directing more funding towards programmes that enable people to buy or rent a home in an area of their choice.

We will release more underutilised state properties for affordable housing development.

We are working with provinces and metros to reclaim buildings that have been hijacked in the city centres and repurpose them for public use.

We will provide 300,000 serviced stands to qualifying beneficiaries to enable housing development in well-planned, connected communities along key development corridors.

We will clear the backlog of title deeds for subsidised housing, turning homes into household assets.

We will review land use, building and other regulations to enable low-cost property development, including backyard housing.

This represents a fundamental



rethink of how the state delivers housing at scale while turning our cities into engines of growth and opportunity.

In making our cities work for their residents, we will restore the remaining passenger rail corridors and stations to full service.

More than 80 percent of passenger rail corridors have been returned to service.

Prasa has introduced over 200 modern, locally-produced trains on its network to provide a low-cost option for public transport.

Over the next five years we will restore Prasa's signalling system so that we can put all our new trains to work and commuters can be assured they can reach work safely, affordably and on time.

We want a nation in which everyone is safe.

The police continue to work with other law enforcement agencies to dismantle organised crime syndicates and combat financial and violent crimes.

The SAPS has partnered with the metropolitan municipalities and is working with communities to fight crime in the priority provinces where crime is particularly high.

We are intensifying Operation Shanela, which has been successful in arresting suspects, recovering firearms and seizing stolen vehicles.

We must tackle the scourge of gun violence that has plagued our society for decades.

I have asked the Minister and the National Commissioner of Police to prioritise reducing gun-related crime and violence. This includes preventing the diversion of firearms into the illicit market and recovering illegal firearms in circulation.

We know from international evidence and our own experience that this is the most effective way to reduce overall violent crime.

The Detective Service, which is crucial to solving cases, will be expanded by 4,000 personnel through internal recruitment processes.

We are working on adopting surveillance, analytics and smart policing solutions for modern law enforcement.

We have seen the value of technology in fighting crime.

By using AI in its fraud risk detection and verification work, SARS has prevented the leakage of over R95 billion in impermissible refunds, recovered R20 billion in revenue and dismantled an illicit tobacco and gold scheme.

We continue to work across society to end the violence that is

perpetrated against women.

We have promulgated the National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Act, establishing a national structure to oversee a coordinated response to this crisis.

We will ensure that the Council is fully functional and properly resourced.

We continue to strengthen support to victims of gender-based violence.

There are now 65 Thuthuzela Care Centres across the country. Out of 52 districts in the country, 44 have GBV shelters.

All police stations in the country have victim friendly services, and another 16 sexual offences courts will be established in the next financial year.

We want a nation that is free of corruption.

Last year, we established the Investigating Directorate Against Corruption as a permanent entity within the NPA dedicated to investigating and prosecuting high-level corruption cases.

We will ensure that the Directorate is fully resourced and has access to the information that it needs to prosecute state capture cases and hold those responsible to account.

We are establishing a world-class digital forensics lab to support the investigation of complex corruption and financial crime with cutting edge tools and expertise.

We are making steady progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the State Cap-



ture Commission, including signing into law several legislative reforms.

The Special Investigating Unit and Asset Forfeiture Unit report that over R10 billion has been recovered in state capture related cases.

This year, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development will report on the review of the anti-corruption architecture by the National Anti-Corruption Advisory Council.

This is expected to streamline legislation, eradicate the duplication of mandates and foster greater cooperation between law enforcement agencies.

We will finalise the whistleblower protection framework and introduce the Whistleblower Protections Bill in Parliament during this financial year.

This year, we will strengthen South Africa's system to combat money laundering and terror fi-

nancing with further legislative and system improvements.

To secure our removal from the international Financial Action Task Force grey list, we have made significant progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in our law enforcement system, with 16 out of 22 action items fully addressed.

We want a nation that is at peace with the world.

We continue through our international relations to advance the well-being of the South African people as we seek to advance the well-being of humanity.

We will work to strengthen our trade relations around the world and to leverage our strong and diverse global alliances to make our economy more resilient.

The key pillars of our foreign policy remain the promotion of human rights, peace and friendship and the strengthening of fair trade and investment ties with

other countries.

These are the principles that guide our Presidency of the G20 this year.

We have chosen the theme of solidarity, equality and sustainable development to underscore the need for cooperation and partnership among the countries of the world.

For the first time in its history, the G20 is being hosted on the African continent following the admission of the African Union as a member of the G20.

It is an opportunity to place the needs of Africa and the rest of the Global South more firmly on the international development agenda.

Our G20 Presidency is a valuable opportunity for South Africa to advance efforts towards greater global economic growth and sustainable development.

Africa remains at the centre of our foreign policy.

We continue to work to strengthen the African Union to support the achievement of peace, development and economic integration on the continent.

We know that our future prosperity is inextricably bound to the prosperity of the African continent.

For Africa to thrive, we must silence the guns on the continent.

Since the advent of democracy, we have been instrumental in restoring stability in countries like Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi, South Sudan and Lesotho.

Most recently, we have been

part of the SADC peacekeeping mission in Mozambique that has brought relative calm and stability to the Cabo Delgado province.

The presence of South African peacekeepers in the eastern DRC is testament to our continued commitment to the peaceful resolution of one of the world's most intractable conflicts, which has cost millions of lives and displaced millions of people.

We call on all parties to embrace the current diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful resolution, including honouring the Luanda Process.

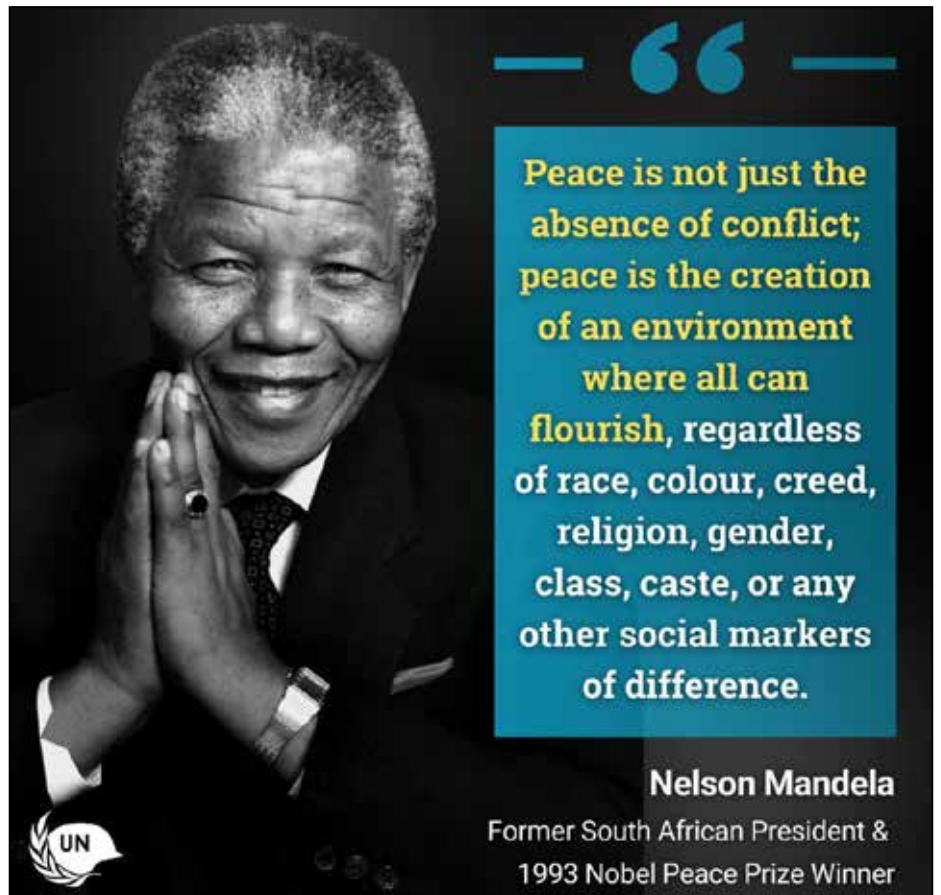
We will attend the Joint Summit between SADC and the East African Community scheduled to take place in Tanzania this weekend, where we will reiterate our call for a ceasefire and a resumption of talks to find a just and enduring solution.

We have always believed that the freedom we won – and the international solidarity from which we benefited – imposes a duty on us to support the struggles of those who continue to experience colonialism and oppression.

South Africa continues to stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine, who, having endured decades of illegal occupation, are now experiencing indescribable suffering.

South Africa has acted in accordance with its obligations under the Genocide Convention by instituting proceedings against Israel at the International Court of Justice.

We are fully committed to the articles of the United Nations Charter, including the principle that all members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means.



CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT

We support the principle of respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states and peoples.

We continue to participate in the different peace processes seeking to bring about a just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

South African delegations have been instrumental in developing a framework for negotiations towards a just peace in Ukraine based on the UN Charter and international law.

South Africa continues to advance its agenda of cooperation and multilateralism through its membership of the United Nations, African Union, the Non-Aligned Movement and BRICS group of countries.

As humanity confronts unprecedented challenges, we are determined that a reformed and representative United Nations must be at the centre of global affairs.

We will continue to push for progress on the reform of the UN Security Council into a more inclusive, more effective body that is able to ensure peace and security.

The work we do and what we stand for needs to be explained to many key players, especially to our trading partners and the many countries and leaders we interact with on the global stage.

With a view to explaining the many positions that we have taken and in particular the objectives we wish to achieve during our Presidency of the G20, I have decided to send a delegation of government and other leaders to various capitals on our continent and across the world.



“As South Africans, we know the power of cooperation, of what is possible when people of different backgrounds, races, cultures, languages, ethnic groups and religions come together behind a shared objective.”

This delegation will interact with various key players on a variety of matters that affect South Africa's interests.

All of these things that we speak of are possible.

As South Africans, we know the power of cooperation, of what is possible when people of different backgrounds, races, cultures, languages, ethnic groups and religions come together behind a shared objective.

The formation of the Government of National Unity provides us with an opportunity to show once again what we can achieve by working together.

I call on all South Africans, united in our diversity, to come together in the National Dialogue to define a vision for our country for the next 30 years.

The National Dialogue must be a place where everyone has a voice. It must be a place to find solutions that make a real difference in people's lives.

The National Dialogue must reaffirm

that each and every one of us has a role to play in building the nation we want.

While we may differ on many issues, we agree on one thing: that we need to build a better South Africa and improve the wellbeing of our people.

And so, as we enter a new era in the world and in our own country, let us speak of the empathy and compassion that we have for one another.

Let us speak of the pride we have for our country and for all that we have achieved.

Let us speak of the determination that won us freedom and that drives us forward now to a better future.

With this determination, we will work together to make this an era of growth, progress and transformation.

We will work together to build the nation that we want.

We will work together to build a nation that works for all.

Mining tragedy at Stilfontein highlights the devastating consequences of the powerlessness of the poor

■ By **SNUKI ZIKALALA, ANC VETERANS LEAGUE PRESIDENT**

IT is a tragedy that at least 78 people died of starvation at the Stilfontein mine.

In the public narrative, it would appear that it is less important that people died and more critical that the majority of miners underground were not South African. Almost every press statement and news report focused not on the hell that they had to endure or the bravery of the rescuers but on the number of miners whose country of origin was Mozambique, Lesotho or elsewhere.

Instead of a call for 'ubuntu', many sectors of our society have raised their voices as to how foreigners are exploiting South African resources and how huge amounts of taxpayers' money had to go to rescue them. It seems that we have forgotten our analyses of colonialism of a special type and of how the South African state was borne on the backs of cheap labour of mine workers across Southern Africa.

We want to disown the legacy of the mine workers that High Masekela sang about in *Stimela* – the workers on the trains that

come from Namibia, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Yet we remember these same mineworkers for their bravery in the 1946 Mineworkers strike and should not forget the leading role the National Union of Mineworkers played in the mass action that defeated the apartheid regime.

Why are we here? We are here because poverty and unemployment in our country is so severe that our people are forced to fight with the "other," who often happen to be from another locality (in and outside South Africa), over scarce opportunities.

We are here because desperate workers with families to take care of are taken advantage of by criminal syndicates, and those with the least access to resources are forced either physically or economically to work under inhumane conditions, including in illegal mining.

In this context, the problem of illegal mining can't be solved by law enforcement bringing up mine workers who are already underground. While Operational *Vala Umgodi* was able to stop a thousand or so miners from mining in Stilfontein, this is the tip of the iceberg. There are estimates that



Stilfontein illegal miners

tens of thousands of workers are still illegally underground in parts of Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Free State and North West.

As many reports point out, there is no separate market for illicit gold. All gold mined has to enter the formal gold market. So, why is the focus not on the international gold players, the mafia, and intermediaries that buy and sell the gold into the formal market? According to information from the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Minister Gwede Mantashe, if this was addressed, South Africa would not have lost R60 billion in 2024 to illegal mining and criminality.

Illegal mining is profitable because the gold price is approximately twice as high today as when many formal gold mines closed. It is reported that South Africa has over 6100 abandoned mines, including 2,322 high risk mines where asbestos, gold, coal and copper were once mined.

Because former mine bosses and the DMRE did not take proper steps under the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act to implement and monitor mine closures, many former closed and abandoned mines are invaded by illegal mine workers enticed and supported by kingpins.

Information in the public domain suggests that Buffelsfontein Gold Mine (BGM) owned the Stilfontein mine shafts ten years ago.

Over the years, ownership has changed hands, and questions have arisen about why mining and labour laws were not followed. Perhaps if our law enforcement agencies were more strategic, this would be the focus of their energies. Instead, they allegedly arrest and then release an illegal mining 'kingpin' and then have to spend resources investigating how members of law enforcement allowed this kingpin to be released.

The DMRE and law enforcement agencies must track down those responsible for the abandoned mines and ensure their proper closure and rehabilitation. Law enforcement should follow the money so those enabling old that is illegally mined can enter the formal market. These people should be facing the full wrath of the law.

It may very well be possible for some of these mines to be formally and legally re-opened under strict and regulatory conditions.

This is behind the call for artisanal mining, although deep-level gold mining is unlikely to lend itself to artisanal mining using picks and shovels with low capital requirements. Yet there is a case for the government to consider appropriately regulating and supporting these mines so that they are safe and that the taxes from the sale of this gold will accrue to the state.

Seeking to appropriately formalise identified mines, growing the economy and getting law enforcement to "*follow the money*" are more sustainable solutions to the crisis of illegal mine workers than going after the poorest and most vulnerable of our society.

In this context, the call for the rule of law and for the end of all illegal activities, including illegal entering the country, illegal mining, lack of compliance with labour and mining laws by mining bosses, money laundering, and extortion, will have greater resonance.

We should lead society to make these calls rather than blaming those whose forebearers helped build our nation.



Why Back-To-School Campaigns and Motivational Talks Matter

■ By **NONCEBA MHLAULI**

EVERY year, as schools re-open, we witness a wave of back-to-school campaigns and motivational talks aimed at encouraging students, parents, and educators. While some may view these initiatives as routine or symbolic, they play a crucial role in shaping the mindset, confidence, and preparedness of learners. These campaigns are more than just a call to return to classrooms; they are about fostering enthusiasm, instilling purpose, and laying the foundation for academic success.

Boosting Morale and Confidence
Starting a new academic year can be daunting for many students. Whether transitioning from one grade to another, changing schools, or simply adjusting after a long break, learners often experience anxiety and uncertainty. Back-to-school campaigns and motivational talks provide reassurance, reminding students that they are not alone in their journey. They inspire learners to approach their studies with optimism, reinforcing the belief that they can overcome challenges and excel.

Encouraging a Growth Mindset

One of the key messages in motivational talks is the concept of a growth mindset – the belief that



intelligence and abilities can be developed through hard work, persistence, and learning from mistakes. When students hear from accomplished individuals, educators, or peers who have overcome obstacles, they are encouraged to embrace perseverance. This mindset fosters resilience, which is essential for academic and personal growth.

Strengthening Parental and Community Involvement

Education is a shared responsibility, and back-to-school campaigns emphasize the role of parents, guardians, and communities in supporting learners. When parents are actively engaged in their children's educa-

tion, students tend to perform better academically and socially. These campaigns remind families of the importance of creating a conducive home environment for learning, setting expectations, and motivating children to take their studies seriously.

Setting Goals and Expectations

Motivational talks often focus on goal-setting, helping students understand the importance of setting academic and personal targets. By encouraging learners to define their aspirations and take actionable steps toward achieving them, these talks instill a sense of direction and responsibility. Students who set clear goals tend to be more fo-

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cused, disciplined, and motivated throughout the school year.

Promoting Inclusivity and Equal Opportunities

For many students, returning to school can come with challenges related to socio-economic status, disabilities, or personal circumstances. Back-to-school campaigns serve as a reminder that education is a fundamental right, and every child deserves equal opportunities to learn and succeed. These initiatives advocate for inclusivity, emphasizing that every student, regardless of background, has the potential to thrive with the right support and mindset.



Fostering a Positive School Culture

A school's culture significantly impacts student engagement and achievement. Motivational talks help create an environment where students feel valued, encouraged, and motivated to learn. When schools prioritize motivation, they cultivate a culture of excellence, collaboration, and mutual respect among students and educators.

Conclusion

Back-to-school campaigns and motivational talks are not just ceremonial events; they are powerful tools that inspire, guide, and prepare students for success. By boosting morale, fostering resilience, promoting inclusivity, and emphasizing the importance of education, these initiatives lay a strong foundation for a productive school year. Investing in student motivation is investing in the future, ensuring that learners enter classrooms not just with books and supplies, but with confidence, purpose, and a drive to excel.

Renewing the Moral Fiber of Our Society to Combat Child and Teenage Pregnancy and Abuse

■ By **MONYATSO MAHLATSI**

IN the words of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela, *"The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members."* This profound statement resonates deeply in the context of an alarming epidemic of child and teenage pregnancy and abuse that threatens the very fabric of our communities. As a proud member of the ANC and the deployee of ANC in government as the MEC for Health, I am grateful to work alongside

dedicated professionals committed to implementing policies that foster a caring society. However, the challenge we face is daunting, particularly with reports of children as young as ten years becoming pregnant. This is not just a statistic, it represents a failure of our collective humanity to protect the most vulnerable members of the human race.

The emotional and psychological toll of child and teenage pregnancy and abuse is staggering.



While physical trauma can often be treated, the emotional scars left on young victims can define their lives and personalities. This trauma can lead to dysfunctional families because the mother and wife who was once abused as a child may be carrying the traumatic effects of her past that may impact negatively on her relationships, thus resulting in dysfunctional families and ultimately a dysfunctional society. It is imperative that we, as a society, take practical steps to address this issue, moving beyond mere lip service to decisive action. This requires a collective effort that is intergenerational involving parents, educators, advocacy groups, religious leaders, and community members. We must unite against the forces that perpetrate these heinous acts, regardless of the social status of the offenders.

One of the critical challenges we face is the stigma surrounding teenage pregnancy, which often results in the victimization of young girls. Our approach must focus on prevention and education, empowering children to understand their rights and speak

out against abuse. This includes fostering an environment where children can report incidents of abuse without fear of retribution. The responsibility lies with us to create a culture that values accountability and respect, ensuring that children are not left to navigate these treacherous waters alone.

Moreover, we must confront the societal norms and traditions that enable these violations. Many homes fail to intervene when children are exposed to inappropriate content, such as pornography, or when young girls are coerced into transactional sex. This moral decay is not just a personal failing, it is a societal issue that must be addressed through collective action. We need to establish "War Rooms" throughout the province that are dedicated to combating child and teenage pregnancy and abuse. This initiative, inspired by the insights of my deliberations with Dr. Mothobi Mofokeng who is an Acting Clinical Manager at Itemoheng Hospital in Senekal in the District of Thabo Mofutsanyana, Free State, aims to mobilize multidisciplinary capabilities, resources and expertise from var-

ious sectors to tackle this crisis head-on whilst leaving no one behind.

We have already started and there is no turning back. On Monday, February 3, 2025 the Free State Department of Health led a collaborative effort of Learners Dialogue on Child and Teenage Pregnancy with the Free State Department of Education, LoveLife, and Soul City. This dialogue of over 700 high school learners from various schools in Senekal discussed the realities of teenage pregnancy and the importance of making informed choices. This initiative is just the beginning and we played our part in hearing our children without the intrusive intimidation of parents in what is often called safe spaces. Their views were represented at the "Taking Health Services to the People," which was held on Tuesday, February 4, 2025. This event provided essential health services, including screenings for TB, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, and mental health support, thereby promoting better health-seeking behavior in our communities.

The idea of establishing 'War

Rooms' to fight the scourge of child and teenage pregnancy and abuse is an idea whose time has come. It was supported and amplified in messages delivered at this event signifying the need for a societal shift in mindset, values and habits. The input of revolutionary technocrats such as Masechaba Sesing, the Free State HOD for Health, reminded us that this is critical because children should never bear the burden of raising other children and worse to be subjected to such horrendous acts of abuse and premature bearing of children when as the children themselves, their bodies have not as yet matured to bear and produce children. Similarly, Mr. Vusi Nhlapo from the National Prosecuting Authority urged community members to report acts of sexual violence, highlighting the severe penalties for offenders, especially those who exploit minors. Such insights are helpful because they can guide the health system as well as the communities at large on how to report such acts of

statutory rape without fear of retribution and victimisation. Health workers are often not supported to take decisive actions such as handling statutory rape because there is often too much at stake and the health workers become victimised by the perpetrators and their families.

As we confront this crisis, it is crucial to acknowledge that we are all part of the solution. The involvement of every sector – government, civil society, and the private sector – is essential to curb the rising tide of teenage pregnancy and abuse. We must collectively seek forgiveness for the moral failings that have allowed these issues to persist and commit to creating a more just and equitable society.

Curbing the scourge of teenage pregnancy requires the involvement of all of us. We must take visible, decisive actions to foster social behavior change and ensure the successful prosecution of those who violate our chil-

dren's rights. By establishing War Rooms in towns across the Free State, we aim to create a robust response to teenage pregnancy and also incorporate other critical societal issues that require our intersectoral and intergovernmental interventions such as gender-based violence, and other social ills such as drug abuse and vandalism of school and health infrastructure including a host of other community assets.

In conclusion, the renewal of our society's moral fiber is not just a lofty ideal; it is an urgent necessity. We must work together to protect our children and ensure that they can grow up in a safe, nurturing environment. Only then can we hope to measure our humanity by the way we treat our most vulnerable members. The time for action is now.

***Monyatso Mahlatsi** is a former Free State Provincial Secretary of Cosatu and deployed as Free State MEC for Health.*



The globalisation of political gaslighting strategy by the DA and AfriForum shall not work

■ By **ZAMIKHAYA MASETI**

THE signing of the Expropriation Act by President Cyril Ramaphosa of the Republic of South Africa has sparked intense debate, with various political parties expressing strong opposition. Some feel betrayed by the President's decision, while others are dissatisfied with specific clauses in the Act, particularly, those related to compensation.

The Neo-Liberals, Right-wingers and Conservatives are vehemently opposed to the Act, prioritizing property and minority rights. In contrast, the ANC firmly defends the resolution of the Land Question, which aims to address injustices and inequalities through land redistribution and restitution.

The Land Question is intricately linked to the National Question, which revolves around creating a united, non-racial, and democratic society. The National Democratic Revolution (NDR), espoused by the ANC ideologues, encompasses both questions, emphasizing their interconnectedness and symbiotic relationship.

According to the Two Stage Theory of the South African Revolu-



tion, resolving these questions is crucial to achieving true liberation and democracy. These two questions are not opposed to each other. Furthermore, the two questions should have been resolved simultaneously at the consolidation phase of the First Stage of the South African Revolution, which was unfortunately deconsolidated after the May 29, 2024, National General Elections.

The GNU partners must acknowledge that they are all in this together despite their differences. The May 29, 2024, National General Elections outcome indicated that no single party emerged victorious, with the collective vote share falling short of 50%.

This reality check should humble

them and clarify that bullying tactics have no place in their partnership.

It is unnecessary to constantly remind the GNU partners of their role and identity. From the perspective of the South African Revolution, the GNU signifies a democratic regression and deconsolidation. At its core, it embodies a critical nexus of class and ideological struggle where inherent and non-antagonistic contradictions must be deliberately accentuated and heightened in order to foster transformative change.

It is an uneasy alliance that needs a balancing act. With Parties representing vastly different constituencies, it is a challenge to find common ground. Their precarious position does not obscure the reality that their interests are often opposed. This fragile coalition is navigating a treacherous terrain, where one misstep could lead to a collective downfall.

The GNU partners must recognize that their fate is intertwined and that cooperation is essential to avoid a disastrous outcome. They must put aside their differences and work towards a com-

mon goal. The fate of the nation depends on its ability to navigate this precarious landscape.

The Democratic Alliance (DA)'s consistent threat to pull out of the GNU whenever there are policy disagreements only to return after the international financial markets stabilize, raises concerns about their autonomy.

It appears that external forces, such as the Rating Agencies, IMF, and World Bank, may be influencing their decisions, rather than prioritizing the needs and interests of South African citizens. This phenomenon is reminiscent of an external locus of control, where individuals or organizations attribute their outcomes to external factors beyond their control. In the DA's case, this might manifest as a lack of agency and accountability, with decisions being driven by external pressures rather than principles or values.

The implication is far-reaching and concerning. If the DA is indeed controlled by outside forces, it undermines the democratic process and sovereignty of South Africa. The notion that international financial markets and neo-colonial interests are dictating the DA's actions is a worrying trend that deserves scrutiny and attention from South African citizens. The political gaslighting strategy of the DA is not only morally reprehensible but also deeply insulting to the intelligence of South Africans.

President Donald Trump's ill-informed statement on his X account regarding South Africa's land confiscation validates and gives credence to my thesis. The AfriForum's inflammatory actions are further exacerbating tensions and stirring up conflict, much like



US President Donald Trump

poking a beehive can provoke a swarm of angry bees.

Trump's provocative message has already sparked a diplomatic row that could escalate into a severe diplomatic fallout between the two countries. Meanwhile, in our country, opportunistic political vultures are circling the GNU, ready to capitalize on its potential downfall. Some are already waiting at the doorstep of the GNU House, which they had initially rejected.

The Black people must unite and speak with one voice – by **Black I mean Africans, the People of Indian origin, the People of Colour, and the people of Khoisan descent** who also bore the brunt of colonial and apartheid oppression and fought side by side in the trenches with Africans during the Great Trek – a mass migration of Boer settlers to the Eastern and northern parts of South Africa from 1835 to 1840.

If we stand united, the DA and AfriForum's political gaslighting strategy will likely lose momentum and ultimately fall apart, exposing their true intentions for all to see. Let us be clear and unequivocally: as the people of South Africa, we shall not toler-

ate the resurgence of Neo-Apartheid and Neo-Colonialism which threaten to undermine our hard-won freedom and sovereignty.

We reject any attempt by the leaders of the DA - AfriForum and their newly found allies from the North to perpetuate systems of oppression and exploitation that seek to roll back our democratic gains. We demand a future where our country is free to chart its course, without interference or coercion from the external powers.

As President Cyril Ramaphosa delivers the State of the Nation Address, he must use this platform to update the world on South Africa's land reform progress since 1994.

He must also assure the Nation and the World that the resolution of the Land Question in South Africa will leave no national group behind. He must also emphasize that signing the Expropriation Act is a significant step forward, replacing the draconian Expropriation Act of 1975 that was rooted in Apartheid and Colonialism.

The new Act aligns with the South African Constitution and upholds human rights. The South African government has a huge respon-

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sibility to eliminate all the vestiges of Apartheid and Colonialism. Those opposing the Expropriation Act want to maintain the status quo.

President Ramaphosa must candidly admit that the 1997 South African Land Reform Policy has failed to transfer agricultural land to Black people. Based on this policy government set a target of transferring 30% of agricultural land to Black Farmers by 2013. However, official data confirms that by the target deadline, only 6% had been successfully transferred. This substantial deviation from the stated objective reflects the ineffectiveness of the adopted policy instruments and the broader administrative inefficiencies associated with their implementation.

Disappointingly, an Audit Report that was released by the then Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform in 2017 revealed that:

- 72% of agricultural land remains in White ownership;
- Africans own a mere 4%;
- People of Colour own 15%;
- People of Indian own just 5%.

These statistics illustrate the limited impact of land reform efforts since 1994. Despite various policy initiatives, the prevailing land ownership structure has remained largely unchanged, perpetuating economic exclusion, spatial inequality, and racialized patterns of land tenure.

The persistence of these disparities highlights the systemic weaknesses in land redistribution mechanisms and necessitates an urgent re-evaluation of government policy.

Compounding this failure is the

reality that even among the land that has been redistributed, 80% remains fallow, primarily due to the lack of post-settlement support, inadequate financing, and ineffectiveness of programmes like the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP). These structural deficiencies have severely compromised the productive utilization of transferred land, reinforcing the economic marginalization of land reform beneficiaries.

A particularly pernicious element that hindered land redistribution efforts is the application of the Willing Seller, Willing Buyer principle.

While often cited as a cornerstone of land redistribution in South Africa, it was not an inherent part of the country's Land Reform Policy but was rather smuggled by neo-

liberal World Bank advisers, who pressured the South African government to adopt a market-based approach to land redistribution.

This external intervention was fundamentally sinister, as it placed the burden of land acquisition on the State while protecting entrenched private landowners from any mandatory redistribution measures. By allowing the market to dictate the pace and pricing of land transfers, this model ensured that the process remained slow, expensive, and fundamentally ineffective.

Zamikhaya Maseti is a Political Economy Analyst, and he holds a Magister Philosophiae (M.Phil.) in South African Politics and Political Economy from the erstwhile University of Port Elizabeth (UPE) now Nelson Mandela University.

I EXPROPRIATION ACT OF 2025 HOW SOUTH AFRICANS BENEFIT FROM THE EXPROPRIATION ACT?



- Land reform and equitable ownership.
- Improved public infrastructure (roads, schools, housing).
- Economic growth and job creation.
- Enhanced food security and rural development.
- Affordable housing and reduced overcrowding.
- Fair and transparent expropriation processes.
- Support for public interest projects (water, conservation, empowerment).
- Increased economic participation for marginalized groups.



Re-setting Industrial Policy for growth, employment and transformation

■ By **KENNETH CREAMER, KHWEZI TIYA and NJABULO SITHEBE**

“The relationship between the national democratic state and all private capital, including monopoly capital, is one of ‘unity and struggle’, co-operation and contestation. On the one hand, the democratic state seeks to create an environment conducive for private investments from which investors can make reasonable returns, and through which employment and technological progress can be derived. On the other hand, through state-owned enterprises, licensing and regulation, taxation, procurement, activism by competition authorities, combatting of illicit financial flows and other means, the state seeks to attain a variety of transformative objectives. These include redistribution of income; further changing the structure of ownership in favour of

Black people, workers, women and communities; directing investments into areas that promote national development; and provision of public goods primarily by the state. The balance between ‘unity’ and ‘struggle’ will be dictated to by the overall strategic imperatives of the NDR and requirements of specific phases of transition to a National Democratic Society.”

ANC Strategy and Tactics,
54th National Conference

Historical Context

The current global context presents many difficult challenges. The post-Cold War neo-liberal era, of the past thirty years, entailing increased economic integration and free trade, is in the process of being supplanted by the emergence of a neo-mercantilist era of antagonistic trading

blocs, and the increasing use of tariffs and protectionism.

Simultaneously, the global economy is undergoing four distinct, and interrelated, transitions:

- An energy transition, characterised by the shift towards lower carbon energy production and sustainable production processes;
- A digital transition characterised by the shift towards greater digitalization of industrial, transactional and communications processes;
- A geopolitical transition characterised by shifting power relations in the world and the creation of new economic and political relationships in global affairs, resulting in increasing tension amongst global powers and impacting on the existing global trade regime; and
- A demographic transition, defined by ageing populations mostly in the advanced econ-

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omies, and by large young populations mostly in the developing countries, particularly in Africa.

While certain aspects of these transitions currently face opposition and political disruption, they are driven by fundamental technological and economic forces which are unlikely to be dislodged. South Africa's industrial policy framework must necessarily take account of these global trends to ensure that the country's industrial policy objectives and instruments are calibrated to be effective.

In addition to the global transitions, which must inform South Africa's new industrial policy, South Africa has the specific challenge of transforming and transitioning away from apartheid patterns of income and asset inequality, towards a truly non-racial, non-sexist, and inclusive economy. As such, policies designed to achieve racial inclusion, such as, Black Economic Empowerment, the Black Industrialists Programme, women's empowerment programmes, and land redistribution programmes, must be advanced as an integral part of the country's industrial policy and programme of national economic development.

A new growth and development strategy

Historically, during the colonial and apartheid period, South Africa's industry was built on the back of the dispossession and exploitation of black communities and black labour and through the mobilisation of investment into a 'minerals and energy complex' (or MEC), which achieved industrial growth and competitiveness through low wages, low energy



prices and the export of unprocessed minerals along with a smaller basket of industrial products.

In the current context, South Africa must seek a new industrial growth model. The inherited MEC model places structural limitations on inclusive growth, in that the MEC is based on minerals extraction rather than beneficiation and is rooted in extreme inequality and racialised exploitation. A new industrial growth model is required for South Africa, one which is aligned with, and can take advantage of, the transitions re-shaping the global economy. As such, South Africa's industrial growth and structural transformation must be linked to a forward-looking strategy, based on Diversification, Digitalization and Decarbonisation, as follows:

- **Diversification** – investment in agriculture, mining, minerals beneficiation, oil and gas resources, manufacturing and services production that is globally competitive and can serve both domestic and global markets,
- **Digitalization** – investment in new broadband telecommunications infrastructure which aims at widening digital access, lowering costs, expand-

ing new platforms and opportunities, and extending skills requirements, and

- **Decarbonisation** – investment in a new lower-carbon production in a range of sectors including cement, iron and steel, aluminium, and fertilisers, as well investment in electricity generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure and energy-related port and pipeline infrastructure.

Key focal areas and instruments to advance the strategy

Industrial policy needs to target investment growth in a number of sectors and given South Africa's structural unemployment crisis, must seek to achieve a balance between high-tech, capital-intensive sectors and labour-intensive industries. Also given the current energy and digital transitions, new sectors needed to be developed such as those linked to the green economy, battery manufacturing, green hydrogen, new energy vehicles, and critical minerals.

Through appropriate incentives and supportive policy South Africa must seek to mitigate the risks faced by the domestic steel, gas and automotive sectors which

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play a key role in sustaining high-tech manufacturing, and related employment and exports. New opportunities in the automotive sector must be developed including battery technologies and other components of new energy vehicles.

There must also be increased focus on high labour-absorbing capacities, such as, clothing and textiles, retail sectors, furniture, agro-processing, plastics, electronics, business services, hospitality and tourism, and the creative industries.

To be effective, industrial policy will need to make use of a number of policy instruments, including:

- Industrial finance, including blended finance and green and just energy transition financing;
- Tax incentives designed to promote investment;
- Infrastructure investment in energy, rail, water, and broadband infrastructure;
- Public and private procurement;
- Special Economic Zone (SEZ's) and industrial parks;
- Strategies to forge industrial clusters that link large anchor firms with SME's, fostering technological spill overs and

job creation;

- Ongoing revision of tariff policies to ensure alignment with wider industrial policy objectives;
- Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) to create new opportunities and deracialise the South African business sector;
- The various sector Master-plans that have been developed should be implemented and continuously reviewed in an inclusive and transparent manner to ensure alignment with changing circumstances;
- Industrial strategy should embrace the potential of South Africa's ports and maritime resources, also drawing from previous work undertaken by Operation Phakisa;
- Employee Share-ownership Schemes (ESOPs) to enable workers to become stakeholders in enterprises where they work;
- Skills development programmes, which includes leveraging public works and social programmes that can be linked to industrialisation activities; and
- Trade and investment agreements to promote exports and participation in global value chains.

Financing to drive industrialisation requires a re-think of which policy instruments are used as well better alignment between industrial policy objectives and existing instruments, include the following:

- The direction of fiscal policy to drive domestic demand and build industrial capacity, with a focus on ensuring growth and investment;
- Instruments that incentivise targeted behaviour, including taxation and incentives;
- The DFI's and their catalytic role, in providing equity financing for Black people, women and other designated groups;
- Financial instruments to commercialise existing technologies that will result in the creation of domestic "unicorns";
- Collaboration with venture capital firms who bring specific expertise for start-up companies;
- Utilising a portion of funds from instruments such as the UIF, the Setas, and the National Skills Fund where there may be scope, subject to prudential considerations;
- Administered prices and the balance between viable delivery of services, productive efficiency, industrial objectives, competitiveness, and welfare objectives;
- Ensure universal digital access, which is critical in the current era to facilitate participation in economic activity, and this will also advance socio-economic transformation with increased participation of Black people in general, and youth, women and other vulnerable groups in particular;
- Structured support for recapitalisation of SOC's as well as Public Private Partnership frameworks to facilitate investments in the transport, energy, water, and other sectors,





where the revenue model of the SOC's may not be sufficient for the required investment;

- Unlocking the funds that are in the pension fund industry noting the changed regulation for allowed capital allocation;
- A specific focus on the institutions that provide financing for SMME's, to upscale the range and level of financing; and
- Utilising capital market solutions, such as, infrastructure bonds.

There must be industrial policy measures to deal with the economic impacts of increasing tariffs on carbon intensive products through the implementation of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) which is planned by the EU and other countries. South Africa must consider mechanisms to incentivise carbon intensive companies to decarbonise their manufacturing processes particularly in cement, iron and steel, aluminium, fertilisers, electricity and hydrogen production. At the same time, South Africa should continue to advocate for international trade solutions, in line with the WTO's legal framework, where unfair trade and investment policies are introduced by developed countries.

For the industrial policy objectives to be realised, an improved skills profile is necessary. This requires an integration and co-ordination of various skills initiatives with the industrial policy framework. Vocational education and training (VET) is critical for this purpose and partnerships with different industries, Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) should be pursued. There should be a focus on developing industry-academia linkages, which strengthen partnerships between universities, TVET colleges, and the private sector to develop curricula aligned with current and future needs.

New Strategic posture

Industrial policy must be elevated from being the sole responsibility of the Department of Trade Industry and Competition (dtic), to being a government-wide priority that requires intensive co-ordination. Many of the implementation levers are under the control of departments and institutions that do not report to the dtic. There needs to be increased coordination among government depart-

ments at various levels, including at local government level, to work toward implementing a renewed national industrial strategy.

South Africa can learn from the role played by other developmental states in mobilising and coordinating increased levels of public and private investment as a key growth driver. Countries such as Brazil and Indonesia, have leveraged resource endowments while fostering industrial diversification through targeted state-led interventions and public-private partnerships.

In this context, the issue of a capable state which includes a capable bureaucracy is a critical part of being able to manage the simultaneous challenge of autonomy and embeddedness. This includes being a state that is capable of providing leadership through policies and instruments that guide and drive the behaviour of vibrant and competitive private sector players in line with national development objectives.

A developmental state should have the vision to take on risk, assist in the building of new industries, create new capabilities and new state-owned entities. An example of this kind of insti-

tution building is South Africa's recent establishment, via the restructuring of Eskom, of the new state-owned entity, the National Transmission Company South Africa (NTCSA), which is tasked with mobilising public and private investment to expand and modernize the national electricity transmission grid. Industrial policy must seek to maximise the benefits of the related increased demand for concrete, steel, skills, technologies, pylons, transformers and other goods and services that this investment will stimulate.

South Africa should use the capacity and technologies that exist through its research institutions, such as, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), the Council for Geoscience, and the South African National Space Agency (SANSa) and combine with a relatively strong financial sector, to aggressively convert the technologies being developed into market opportunities.

In many countries, publicly-funded research agencies play a significant role in the advancement of the sectors and technologies critical to industrialisation, including energy, manufacturing, agroprocessing, digitalization, data access, as well as deepening human capital and international cooperation.

This will include an increased role for Development Finance Institutions (DFI's), such as, the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) and Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), which, while building on their existing financing portfolios, can include through partnership with private sector venture capital firms, mobilise the risk capital that is criti-

cal for new ventures to be able to take off.

Given the necessary export orientation for the success of large parts of South Africa's industrial strategy, the global context will have to be carefully analysed and monitored. In order to advance South Africa's national interest, it will be beneficial to sell goods and services into new markets via our BRICS Plus relationships, without compromising relations and market access with historical trading partners, such as, China, India, the EU and through the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). In addition to this, South Africa should tactfully position itself as a location that provides a platform to access the global market without restriction, given its existing trade relationships. Furthermore, South Africa must use its position as the Chair of the G20 to advance the country's economic interests as well as the interests of Africa and the wider Global South.

Way forward

As stated in the ANC's January 8 Statement earlier this year: *"Manufacturing is the most reliable sustained employment creator with the highest jobs multiplier. Therefore, we must revitalise our industrial capacity. We must build an infrastructure and export-led economy focused on manufacturing globally competitive goods and global business services and invest in technological capabilities."*

An economic programme to accelerate growth, industrial investment and transformation is essential to create employment and improve living standards.

The ANC should deepen engagement with Alliance partners and social partners on these critical economic policy questions. Through this process ANC members will be empowered to better advance the organisation's policy positions and clearly articulate the ANC's programme of economic transformation.



A Letter from Moscow

Some Considerations on the Negotiations over Ukraine

■ By **DR. VYACHESLAV (SLAVA) TETEKIN**

WITH US President Donald Trump assuming office, speculations on a possible political settlement of the war in Ukraine have sharply intensified. During his election campaign, Trump claimed that he would end the war in one day. Having become President, he stated more realistically that the settlement might take about six months. But now he insists that peace should be achieved in one hundred days.

The press is filled with statements by politicians and comments by journalists about the prospects for negotiations. However, the abundance of statements makes it more difficult to understand the essence of events. Let us try to single out of the mass of documents, speeches and comments the main factors that might influence the outcome of the negotiations and the end of the war in Ukraine

Trump's goals

The US President says that he wants to end the war as it is senseless and bloody. The sincerity of his humanitarian motives is questionable: Trump fully



supports Israel engaged in Genocide and ethnic cleansing in the Gaza Strip. And it is not soldiers who die there, as in the fields of Ukraine. The overwhelming majority of the Jewish state victims are civilians – the elderly, women and children: over 50 thousand people. But Trump announced that he will continue to supply weapons to Israel. So Trump's goals are far from humanitarian.

However, Trump, unlike the Democrats – Neocons, does not consider Russia a threat to US interests. He believes that China is a threat. Therefore, he thinks it necessary:

1. To stop the US huge expenses on the war against Rus-

sia and the maintenance of NATO. Trump needs money for his major domestic socio-economic programs.

2. To save Ukraine through a ceasefire and negotiations from the complete defeat, which is inevitable should the war continue.
3. To try if not to tear Russia away from China but at least to weaken the close relations between the two countries, which make more difficult Trump's plans for China?

Resistance

Although Trump's intentions are in the US interests (at least in the interpretation of the current Head of

State), the ruling class (the Deep State) will resist. For decades America's international relations have been run by a special foreign policy elite committed to the idea of the US global domination. They are not very interested in domestic, socio-economic problems of the US population. America's foreign policy establishment will oppose Trump, as he is going against the entrenched opinion that Russia (as a continuation of the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire) is the main enemy of the Western world.

The Europeans led by Great Britain – centuries-old opponents of Russia regardless of its political system – are determined to continue “*the war to the last Ukrainian*”. Apart from the British, Pres Macron, the future German Chancellor and Poland fiercely more Russophobic than Washington. As well as tiny, but very noisy Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia (small dogs always bark more aggressive than the big ones).

UK initially played a central role in arming Ukraine and pushing it into a war with Russia. Therefore, London is undoubtedly sending to Kiev completely different signals than Washington. We remember that the already initiated Istanbul Ceasefire Agreement of April, 2022 was torpedoed by the British Prime Minister B. Johnson: “let's fight.” The EU will not be able to fully take over the maintenance of Ukraine without America, but Kiev with the support of the EU will be able to hold out for some time.

The US Neocons and European Liberals invested huge amounts of energy and money in creating the monster of Bandera regime in Kiev as a weapon against Russia. And they are not prepared to eas-

ily admit the historic defeat of their plans to destroy Russia using their puppets in Ukraine. They are going to sabotage Trump's peace plans by all means possible.

Russia's position

Russia is strongly interested in peace. Tens of thousands of Russian soldiers and officers have already died in the war. The number of wounded may reach several hundred thousand. These are huge losses by any standards. During the daily shelling of Donbass cities by Ukrainian troops, dozens civilians are dying. The war is taking place on historic Russian territory. Our own cities are being destroyed during the fighting. We are experiencing certain inconveniences from Western sanctions.

However, given the complexity of the situation it is hardly realistic to expect political settlement within 6 months let alone in 100 days.

On the basis of Istanbul Agreements (albeit a bit outdated) and recent statements by President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov, Russia's main approaches to the negotiations may be formulated the following way:

1. We have serious reasons not to trust the West. They are unreliable partners. In 2015, when the troops of the Donbass republics began a successful liberation of the entire region, Russia accepted the request of France and Germany for a ceasefire. The result was the Minsk Agreements, which were later used to rearm the Ukrainian army and prepare it for war with Russia. Pres Macron and former Chancellor Merkel admit-

ted this publicly and shamelessly.

Before Istanbul Peace Agreements were initiated on April, 15, 2022 the Western side asked Russia to withdraw its troops from around Kiev and some other major cities as a sign of good will. We did that on April, 2, 2022. Istanbul Agreements were never signed. They cheated us again. We suspect they are going to repeat this wonderful example of political honesty.

2. The model proposed by the West (immediate ceasefire and then lengthy negotiations with an uncertain outcome) **is unacceptable to us.** Russia will not agree to some kind of “Minsk-2”. Negotiations and military actions will most likely proceed in parallel until the negotiations reach a result acceptable to all parties. Precedent: negotiations to end the Vietnam War.

3. Sanctions. The West has imposed maximum sanctions against Russia. Trump will have little to add. The drop in oil prices, which the US President is calling for, will also hit the American economy as the US is the world's largest oil producer. The West promises to lift quickly only some sanctions and the rest some time later (in about three years).

This is unacceptable for Russia. The West has often deceived Russia, delaying the fulfillment of promises or refusing to keep them altogether. We expect that all sanctions will be lifted completely and immediately.

But the main thing is that Russia is confidently coping with

the sanctions. Of course, they complicate foreign trade and financial transactions, forcing Russian business to look for complex and expensive schemes.

On the other hand, the Western import ban has led to a revival of the manufacturing including aircraft industry in Russia almost destroyed over the last several decades of “partnership with the West”. As a result of the sanctions, Russia is rapidly moving away from the semi-colonial model of trade and economic relations with the West (export of energy resources from Russia and import of industrial goods). Now there is a fast development of machine tool manufacturing, electronics and other high-tech industries, science and technology. Sanctions are beneficial to Russia in the long term as an engine of its development.

4. **Legitimacy of negotiations.**

In October, 2022 President Zelensky signed a decree prohibiting any negotiations with Russia until complete withdrawal of its troops. Even the West admits that this is unrealistic. However, Zelensky refuses to revoke the decree. This means that he can take part in negotiations with Russia but cannot sign any document. Zelensky’s term of office ended last May. He is illegitimate as a President as will be any document signed by him.

5. **Russia needs firm guarantees** that in 7-10 years-time the Bandera regime in Kiev, having received a breathing space and restored the army with NATO support, will not



move against Russia again. We insist on Ukraine’s complete neutrality like Austria and Switzerland (though these “neutral” states supply weapons to Kiev). Ukraine can keep an army, but of a minimal size, as envisaged by the draft Istanbul Agreements. No foreign bases and weapons on the territory of Ukraine.

6. **Recognition of the new borders of Russia.**

We will not leave the territories returned to Russia in 2022-2025, because these lands have belonged to Russia for centuries. The West will have to recognize this fact. Russian troops are advancing. The Ukrainian army is suffering heavy losses. The estimates are half a million dead. It is still capable of resisting. But the depletion of human reserves can quickly lead to disaster. We might not demand now the return of Odessa and Nikolayev (also historic Russian territories) as was conceived earlier. But the West and Kiev need to hurry, because the Ukrainian army is becoming weaker every day, while the Russian army is liberating more and more historical lands of Russia.

7. **Recognition of the status**

of the Russian language and the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine.

8. And the last but not the least. **The security of Russia’s Western borders.** The war has overshadowed the fact that Russia approached NATO in December, 21 and again in January, 22 with a suggestion to discuss measures to stop and turn back NATO expansion to the East and other steps to ensure Russia’s security. Ukrainian neutrality was only part of the package. Our appeals to negotiate were very arrogantly turned down. But our broader security concerns did not disappear. They need to be recognized and discussed. Not with former President Zelenski...

Of course, this is an unofficial and incomplete list of factors that might influence the success (or failure!) of the negotiations. But it does give an idea that the negotiations will be long and hard. They will undoubtedly result in peace in Ukraine. It is only a question of time and willingness of the West to recognize the legitimate vital interests of Russia. Which they are historically very reluctant to do. This is the main obstacle to peace...

Time will tell, but Russia’s advances on the military front, reorganization of our industrial and technological economy, the spirit of our people and fighting forces – compared to Ukrainians woes and Europe’s needs – is pointing to the changes that are bound to follow. With Tramp in office the West’s game plan is been challenged.

Dr. Vyacheslav (Slava) Tetekin is a Member of CC, Communist Party of the Russian Federation.

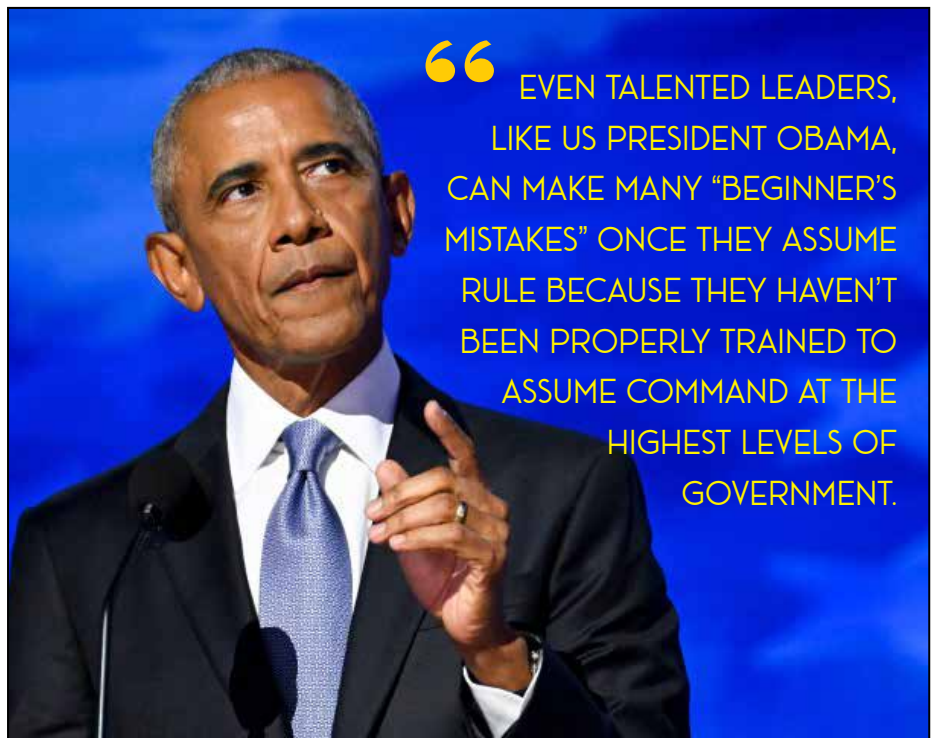

 Part Two

Meritocracy Is a Good Thing

■ By **DANIEL A. BELL**

THE advantages of “*actually-existing*” meritocracy in the CCP are clear. Cadres are put through a grueling process of talent selection, and only those with an excellent record of past performance are likely to make it to the highest levels of government.

The training process includes the cultivation of virtues such as compassion for the disadvantaged by such means as limited periods of work in poor rural areas. Moreover, this kind of meritocratic selection process is only likely to work in the context of a one-party state. In a multi-party state, there is no assurance that performance at lower levels of government will be rewarded at higher levels, and there is no strong incentive to train cadres so that they have experience at higher levels, because the key personnel can change with a government led by different party. So even talented leaders, like US President Obama, can make many “beginner’s mistakes” once they assume rule because they haven’t been properly trained to assume command at the highest levels of government (see, e.g., <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/print/2012/03/obama-explained/8874/>). Leaders in China are not likely to make such mistakes because of their experience and training.



“EVEN TALENTED LEADERS, LIKE US PRESIDENT OBAMA, CAN MAKE MANY “BEGINNER’S MISTAKES” ONCE THEY ASSUME RULE BECAUSE THEY HAVEN’T BEEN PROPERLY TRAINED TO ASSUME COMMAND AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

The fact that decision-making at the highest-levels is by committee – the nine-member Standing Committee of the Politburo – also ensures that no one person with outlandish and uninformed views can decide upon wrong-headed policies (such as Lee Kuan Yew’s policies in Singapore favoring births by educated women that were based on eugenics theories rejected by most scientists).

Once Chinese leaders reach positions of political power, they can make decisions that consider the interests of all relevant stakeholders, including future generations and people living outside the

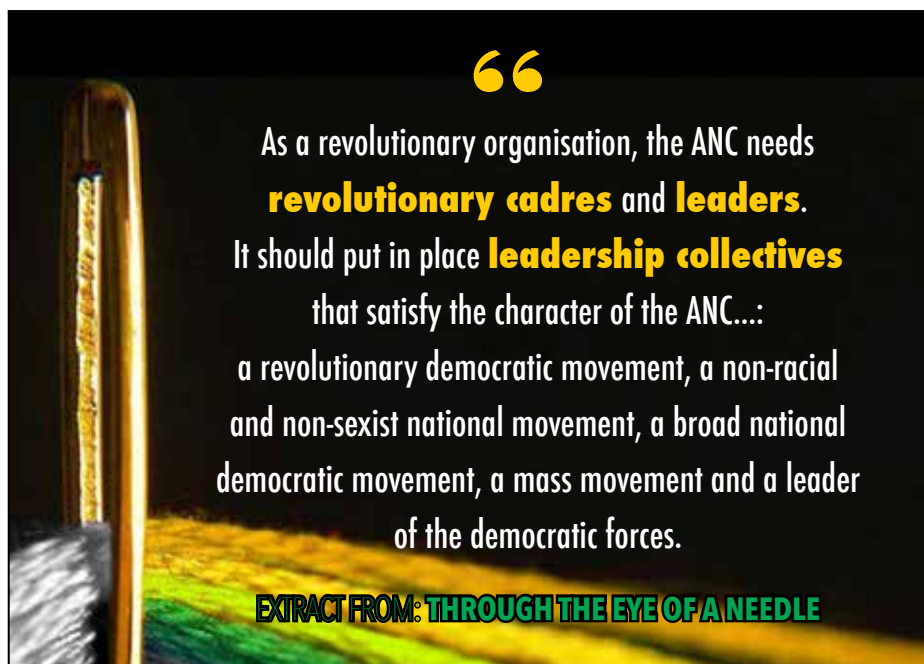
state. In multi-party democracies with leaders chosen on the basis of competitive elections, by contrast, leaders need to worry about the next election and they are more likely to make decisions influenced by short-term political considerations that bear on their chances of getting reelected. The interests of non-voters affected by policies, such as future generations, are not likely to be taken seriously if they conflict with the interests of voters.

Moreover, the fact that the real power holders in Western-style democracies are supposed to be those chosen by the people in

CURRENT AFFAIRS

elections often means that “*bu-reaucrats*” are not considered to be as important; hence, less talent goes to the bureaucracy. This flaw may be particularly clear in the American political system. A recent conversation with a young recipient of a Rhodes scholarship (perhaps the most prestigious scholarship in the American educational system, designed to choose future leaders) is revealing. She is interested in international affairs, and I suggested that perhaps she can join the US State Department, but she said that she had been warned that it’s hard for people of ambition and talent to succeed in that setting. In contrast, the Chinese political system does not clearly distinguish between “*bureaucrats*” and “*power-holders*” and thus ambitious people of talent are not discouraged from joining the political system at the lower levels, with the hope of moving upwards.

This is not to imply that the US and other countries should strive to emulate Chinese-style meritocracy. For one thing, political meritocracy is more likely to be workable and stable in a certain type of political culture: as noted above, political surveys show that people in East Asian countries with a Confucian heritage tend to value political meritocracy, but the same may not be true in other cultures. For example, the American political culture has developed a strong “anti-elitist” ethos, so it is hard to imagine support for meritocratic one party rule. This is not to deny that there are elitist elements in the American political system (for example, recent US presidents are graduates of Harvard and Yale), but political leaders tend not to be too open about such elitist characteristics.



“

As a revolutionary organisation, the ANC needs **revolutionary cadres and leaders.**

It should put in place **leadership collectives** that satisfy the character of the ANC...: a revolutionary democratic movement, a non-racial and non-sexist national movement, a broad national democratic movement, a mass movement and a leader of the democratic forces.

EXTRACT FROM: **THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE**

Moreover, it is difficult to imagine major constitutional reform of the US political system that would encourage more meritocracy (it is possible to foresee constitutional change for the worse – e.g., in the event of another major terrorist attack on American soil – but not change for better). In contrast, the Chinese constitutional system seems more amenable to substantial political change if circumstances require.

Nor do I mean to imply that “*actually-existing meritocracy*” in China cannot be improved. The success of meritocracy in China is obvious: China’s rulers have presided over the single most impressive poverty alleviation achievement in history, with several hundred million people being lifted out of poverty. Equally obvious, however, some problems in China – corruption, gap between rich and poor, environmental degradation, abuses of power by political officials, overly powerful state-run enterprises that skew the economic system in their favor, harsh measures for dealing with political dissent, repression of religious expression in Tibet

and Xinjiang – seem to have worsened during the same period the political system has become meritocratic. Part of the problem is that China lacks democracy at various levels of government that could help to check abuses of power and provide more opportunities for political expression by marginalized groups. But part of the problem is also that political meritocracy has been insufficiently developed in China. The system has become meritocratic over the last three decades or so, but it can and should become more meritocratic in the future.

Room for Improvement

Political meritocracy involves the selection and promotion of political officials with both ability and virtue, and let me discuss each in turn. Perhaps the most significant improvement within the Chinese Communist Party over the last three of decades has been more emphasis on the selection and promotion of officials with above average intellectual ability, especially at the higher levels of government. However, the system is not as meritocratic as

it could be, even in this respect. Consider the “anti-meritocratic” effects of constraints on freedom of political speech. The best political decisions, of course, need to be based on complete information, but fear of negative consequences may inhibit stakeholders from expressing their viewpoints. I realize that the CCP carries out internal polling to get as much information as possible, and that cadres are encouraged to constantly learn and improve, but fewer barriers to the freedom of speech may improve the quality of decision-making.

Another area of concern is that the rigorous, multi-year talent selection process may discourage risk-taking. In other words, relatively creative and original minds may be weeded out early because they have offended people or challenged the “normal way of doing things.” In times of crisis, perhaps the Chinese political system allows for substantial change, but in ordinary times, there may be unnecessary attachment to the status quo long after it has extended its practical utility. Perhaps this problem can be remedied by allowing for some positions in important government posts (including the Politburo) to be reserved for talented people from other walks of life, such as business or academia.

There may also be a need for more international exposure in the selection process. The main task of the Chinese Communist Party is of course to serve the Chinese people. But China is now a great global power, and what it does also affects the interests of people living outside of China, and it needs to be as humane as possible in its dealings with other countries. It is a good sign that the children of govern-

ment leaders are often educated abroad because they can serve as informal advisors, but nothing takes the place of personal exposure to foreign ways of doing things. Perhaps the selection process of high-level government leaders can also value experience abroad and even foreign language skills. Yan Xuetong argues that the Chinese government should employ more talented foreigners as officials, similar to the Tang dynasty (*Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power*, Princeton University Press, 2011).

Equally important, there may be a need for more representation by members of minority groups at the highest levels of government, even if they didn’t rise through the political system. Only sincere adherents of a religion can really know what’s best for their religion and meritocratic decision-making would involve more representation by members of religious communities. One possibility is to reserve spots for members of minority groups on the Politburo. Jiang Qing proposes a House of Cultural Continuity composed of leaders of

diverse religions with a long historical presence in China, including Confucianism, Tibetan Buddhism, Daoism, and Christianity.

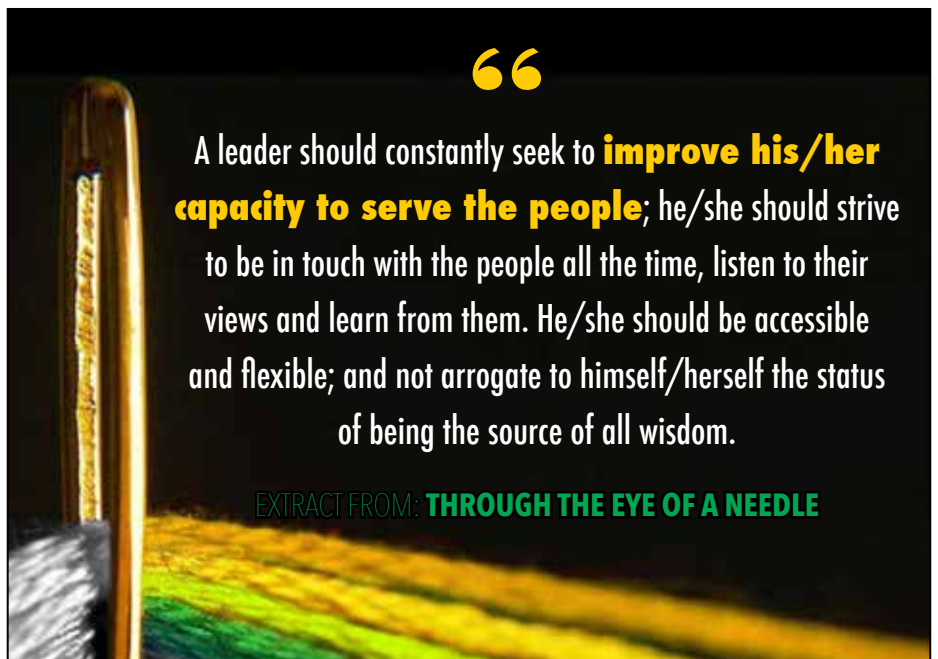
Of course, meritocratic-decision making is not just a matter of having the ability and knowledge to make political decisions. Immoral decision-makers with high-level analytical skills and local knowledge can do more damage than not-so-competent political leaders who may not be able to figure out the best means to realize immoral ends. I do not mean to imply that Chinese political leaders lack virtue.

I’ve met many admirable political officials who are public-spirited and committed to the common good, even at substantial cost to their own interests. But virtuous leaders should not be corrupt, and just about everybody in China recognizes that political corruption is a serious problem. Term and age limits for Chinese leaders are helpful. But there is a need for other mechanisms to reduce corruption – a relatively independent anti-corruption agency (similar to Hong Kong and



A leader should constantly seek to **improve his/her capacity to serve the people**; he/she should strive to be in touch with the people all the time, listen to their views and learn from them. He/she should be accessible and flexible; and not arrogate to himself/herself the status of being the source of all wisdom.

EXTRACT FROM: **THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE**



Singapore), more transparency, more freedom for media to report on cases of corruption, financial audits for leaders and their family members, higher salaries for leaders, and harsh punishments for corruption. More rigorous emphasis on ethical education for political leaders is also necessary. The current leadership selection process does not allow for enough time for systematic reflection on ethical and political matters. A few weeks at the Party School is not sufficient for leaders to read the great works in politics, history, and philosophy that deepen one's knowledge as to possibilities of morally-informed political judgments. If political leaders were encouraged, say, to take a six-month leave period with few obligations other than reading great works (especially the Confucian classics that focus more directly on political morality), the long-term effect on the ability to make morally-informed political judgments is likely to be positive. Equally if not more important, more emphasis on the Confucian classics in primary and secondary schools is likely to improve the moral education of future Chinese leaders.

Of course, a political decision maker should do more than refrain from corruption. He or she must also be motivated by humanity and compassion for people, animals, and the natural world. But is it difficult to reconcile this desideratum with the extreme under-representation of females in the political decision-making bodies, especially at the highest levels. The current leadership selection process is biased against females: the process is so time-consuming that it seems hard to reconcile with ordinary family life. Since females are often the main care-takers

of family members, they may not have sufficient time to compete fairly with males for top government posts (even if females are not the main care-takers, such expectations influence the selection process: I'm told that it is more difficult for females to be hired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because of the expectation that such posts are difficult to reconcile with ordinary family life). If we agree that compassion is mainly a female trait, then we should encourage more females in government. Perhaps half of the government positions at the highest levels of government should be reserved for females. I have no doubt that a government composed of more female leaders is more likely to rule in a compassionate and humane way.

Obviously, the process of "meritocratization" is a long term transformation for which there is no clear end-point (unlike, say, "democratization," which usually means free and fair competitive elections for a country's top political leaders). But one clear way forward would be for the Chinese Communist Party to change its name so that it better corresponds to the institutional reality of the organization, as well as to what it aspires to be. Most obviously, the organization is no longer Communist and few Chinese, including members of the CCP, believe that the party is leading the march to higher communism. Political meritocracy was valued neither by Marx nor by Mao. Lenin's idea of the vanguard party was also different. Moreover, the party is not a political party among others. It is a pluralistic organization composed of different groups and classes that represents the whole country, and to a lesser extent, the world. A more accurate name might be the Chi-

nese Meritocratic Union.

Let me end with one point that will be intensely controversial in countries with a democratic heritage. China can learn much from the political virtues typically associated with democratic regimes: political participation, freedom, transparency, and toleration. But the country can and should build upon the actual and potential advantages of political meritocracy: the decades long training of political officials entrusted with the top political decision making powers, the ability to make decisions that take account of the interests of future generations, the rest of the world, and the natural world, even when they conflict with the interests of the majority of citizens, and decision-making by committee rather than vesting ultimate decision-making powers in one individual (such as the US President). These advantages of meritocracy are compatible with more freedom, transparency, toleration, political participation at sub-national levels of government, and a certain degree of political competition at the

top. But meritocracy is incompatible with multi-party competition at the top and one-person one vote for the selection of top decision makers. Hence, the task in China is to improve meritocracy and learn from parts of democracy, but not from what many democrats today would consider to be its core element.

Daniel A. Bell is Zhiyuan chair professor at Jiaotong University (Shanghai) and professor of political theory and director of the center for international and comparative political theory at Tsinghua University (Beijing). He is the co-editor (with Fan Ruiping) of *Jiang Qing's A Confucian Constitutional Order* (Princeton University Press, 2012).

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

8–14 February 2025

Source: SA History Online, O'Malley Archives, Africa Today/Yesterday, The Africa Factbook and Amazwi SA Museum of Literature

8 February 1884 King Cetshwayo passed on



King Cetshwayo was born to Mpande, who was King Shaka's half-brother in 1826. His father declared him his successor very early on in life, which was unusual for a King to do. As Cetshwayo grew older, he began to undermine his father's authority and assumed control of the kingdom. By the time Mpande died, he was only King by name as Cetshwayo had long taken over the decision making powers. The British grew worried as they watched Cetshwayo's military power grow rapidly. The British orchestrated a plan to annex the kingdom. The Zulus were given an ultimatum: Cetshwayo should forsake his sovereignty and his army should disarm. When Cetshwayo rejected the ultimatum, war broke out. The Zulus won the battle of Isandlwana but lost the battle of Ulundi. He died on 8 February 1884. Despite a prior attempt to assassinate him. It is possible that his death was caused by a heart attack, rather than the poisoning rumored at the time.

8 February 1906 Start of the Bambatha rebellion



Natal, in the early years of the 20th century was the site of conflict between Colonial Administrators and autonomous African kingdoms. The death of Cetshwayo in Eshowe in 1884, the last of the independent Zulu kings, left the task of resistance to colonial rule to be pursued by minor chiefs. By 1906, one of the most formidable of these chiefs, Bambatha, resisted colonial measures of imposing a poll tax on his subjects in addition to the hut tax. This led to a first standoff between him and the colonial officials. Bambatha was determined to resist the 1 pound poll tax imposed by the colonial government. The divisional magistrate in Bambatha's area, T. R. Bennet was equally determined to carry out the task of collecting taxes from Bambatha's subjects. When Bennet arrived in Bambatha's homestead he was not welcomed. The next day the colonial government dispatched a party of fourteen policemen un-

der the leadership of Sub Inspector Hunt to arrest Bambatha and the rebels. Two policemen were killed and the rest were forced to retreat. It became clear that Bambatha was not to be intimidated. This marked the beginning of the Bambatha Rebellion.

9 February 1874 Nkosi Langaibalele banished to Robben Island

While inhabiting the area near present day Estcourt in the Drakensberg foothills, Langaibalele – a hereditary chief of the Hlubi – was summonsed to Pietermaritzburg for failure to register firearms. The Hlubi had received these firearms as a form of payment from the owners of diamond mines. After refusing to go to Pietermaritzburg, a force was sent against Langaibalele. He subsequently fled the colony, but three of the colonial troops were killed in a clash on the Bushman's River Pass. Deemed to be in rebellion, the Hlubi chief was captured and sent to Pietermaritzburg where he was put on trial by a kangaroo court which consisted of substantial procedural irregularities. Lieutenant-Governor Sir Benjamin Pine punished the Hlubi by breaking up their location, confiscating their cattle, and imprisoning Langaibalele on Robben Island. Langaibalele was therefore one of the first Black activists to be banished to Robben Island, nearly a century before Nelson

Mandela and numerous other activists who were imprisoned there.

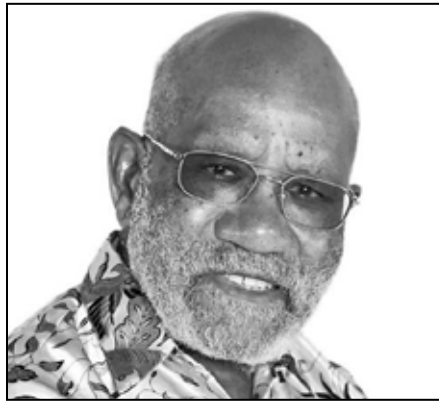
9 February 1955 Sophiatown residents forcefully removed



In the early hours of 9 February 1955, around 2 000 policemen, armed with guns, knobkerries and rifles, forcefully moved the families of Sophiatown to Meadowlands, Soweto. Their possessions were loaded at the back of police trucks, and dumped in Meadowlands where they were forced to stay. With their children, these families were exposed to cold and rainy weather conditions. The forced removals were part of the government's countrywide apartheid plan to turn the residential and business areas of cities and towns white. More than 60,000 residents from Sophiatown were forcibly removed. A new, white suburb was built on the ruins of Sophiatown and named Triomf.

9 February 1968 Toivo ya Toivo and others sentenced

The presiding judge in the Pretoria terrorist trial, Justice Ludorf convicted 30 SWAPO activists for conspiring to overthrow the South West Africa administration (Namibia). SWAPO founder, Toivo ya Toivo, who was sentenced to 20 years on Robben Island,



made the following speech at the trial: "We are Namibians, and not South Africans. We do not now, and will not in the future, recognise your right to govern us; to make laws for us, in which we had no say; to treat our country as if it was your property and us as if you are our masters. We have always regarded South Africa as an intruder in our country. This is how we have always felt and this is how we feel now and it is on this basis that we have faced this trial." In 1990 Namibia gained independence from South Africa.

9 February 1978 Winnie Mandela sentenced to prison



Winnie Mandela, restricted to the town of Brandfort, in the then Orange Free State, was sentenced to six months imprisonment (suspended for four years) for break-

ing her banning and house arrest order by receiving unauthorised visits by friends and relatives.

10 February 1957 First AFCON tournament starts in Khartoum

The first Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) football tournament started in Khartoum, Sudan, with only three teams competing: Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, after South Africa was disqualified for its apartheid policies. Egypt won the first Cup.

10 February 1985 Zindzi reads Mandela Message



Zindzi Mandela reads out her father, Nelson Mandela's, rejection of President PW Botha's offer of conditional release at a United Democratic Front (UDF) rally.

10 February 1988 UDF Activist Pearl Tshabalala assassinated

Ms Pearl Tshabalala, a prominent businesswoman and member of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in Clermont, Durban, who had resisted moves to incorporate Clermont into the KwaZulu homeland state, was fatally shot. This was allegedly done by

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Caprivi trainees led by Daluxolo Luthuli, acting on instruction from Samuel Jamile, former deputy minister of the KwaZulu government. Tshabalala was shot in front of her five-year-old child as she was leaving her business in Clermont. Her assassination also served before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

10 February 1991 17 million people arrested for pass violations

Minister of Law and Order Adriaan Vlok said that between 1921 and 1986 more than 17 million people had been arrested under influx control laws for pass violations.

11 February 1966 District Six force removals start



On 11 February 1966, the mixed race residential area of District Six in Cape Town was declared a 'White area' under the 1950 Group Areas Act of the apartheid government. Over 60,000 people were moved from District Six to various Cape Flats townships, based on racial classification.

11 February 2000 Nelson Mandela Museum opened in Mthatha

The Nelson Mandela Museum is a three component structure comprising of a museum in Mthatha, a visitors' centre in Mvezo and a youth centre in Qunu, all in the Eastern Cape. The museum



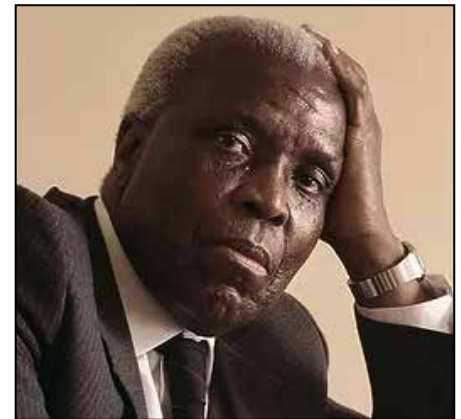
was opened by then President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela himself on 11 February 2000, exactly ten years since his release from prison. Positioned in the area of his birth, the museum receives tourists from all over the globe. The Bhunga building in town usually holds exhibitions of Mandela memorabilia such as gifts the late statesman has received throughout his life. The Mvezo visitor's centre situated at Mandela's birth place offers visitors a glimpse into his early childhood. The Qunu Youth Centre, situated in the place where Mandela and his mother took refuge and where he grew up, gives visitors an experience of his school years and young adulthood.

11 February 2022 Toxic waste win for Tunisia

The Tunisian NGO Réseah Tunisie Vert wins an environmental victory blocking 200 shipping containers holding 7,900 tons of toxic rubbish that Italy sought to dump in Tunisia. The waste was illegally declared by the shipping line as 'recyclables', until the seizure by authorities. On this day, the governments of Tunisia and Italy settled that the waste would be shipped back to Europe.

12 February 1920 Rivonia Trialist Raymond Mhlaba born

Raymond Mhlaba, was born on 12 February 1920 in Mazoka village



near Fort Beaufort in the Eastern Cape. He joined the trade union movement as a young worker and in 1943 and 1944 joined the Communist Party and the ANC. He was amongst the first to be arrested for defying apartheid laws in 1952 and was detained together with Govan Mbeki and Vuyisile Mini. He joined Umkhonto we Sizwe after the ANC banning in 1962, and was sent to China for military training. Before leaving, he helped Mandela to draft the first MK Constitution. Upon his return as MK commander, he was arrested and charged in the famous Rivonia trial. In 1964, he was sentenced to life imprisonment, which he served on Robben Island for 25 years. After his release in 1989, he was elected to the ANC NEC and SACP CC, also serving as Party Chairperson from 1995 till his passing. Om Ray served as the first Premier of the Eastern Cape (1994-1999) and then as High Commissioner to Uganda, till his retirement in 2001. Honours bestowed on him included Isithwalandwe/Seaparankwe, the highest ANC honour and the Moses Kotane Award by the SACP. Raymond Mhlaba passed away on 20 February 2005.

12 February 1982 Journalist Thami Mazwai jailed

On 12 February 1982 journalist Thami Mazwai was jailed for

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two years after refusing to present facts against a former fellow student-leader charged under the Terrorism Act. At the time Mazwai was a journalist with the Sowetan.

12 February 1989 Vatican condemns Apartheid

The Vatican issues a report, "The Church and Racism", in which apartheid is condemned as the most evil, systematic form of institutionalised racism.

12 February 2019 Victory for Teff in Dutch Court

A court in the Netherlands has ruled that two Dutch patents for processing teff, a kind of grain which has been used for thousands of years to make injera, the fermented pancake that Ethiopians eat with their meals, are null and void. (*Kluwer Patent Blog*)

12 February 2020 Egypt's population reaches 100 million

The Egyptian statistics office announced that the population reached 100 million, with 10% of the total population living in Cairo, and the remainder mostly in cities along the River Nile or the Red Sea. Egyptian population reached 114 million by 2024, making it the

third most populous African country after Nigeria (229 million) and Ethiopia (129 million), followed by Tanzania (69 million) and South Africa (61 million).

13 February 1713 Smallpox epidemic strikes the Cape, annihilate Khoi clans

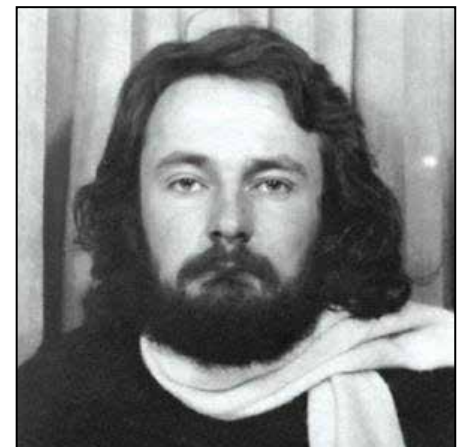
Smallpox is exogenous to Africa, and mainly brought to the continent by European settlers or through contact with areas outside Africa. The Dutch East India Company established a halfway station at the Cape of Good Hope, laying the foundation for the colonization of South Africa, with settlers moving more and more inland. A smallpox epidemic broke out in 1713, after arriving with the crew on a Dutch ship. The disease wreaked irreparable havoc amongst the indigenous and colonist population of the Cape Peninsula and adjacent interior. Hardest hit were the indigenous Khoisan people, with whole clans wiped out. In other instances, the few survivors could not reconstruct a coherent clan. For this reason, the indigenous clan names were lost. Instead the Khoikhoi became known by the derogatory term "Hottentots". As the smallpox epidemic decimated most of the Khoikhoi, what remained of their economic strength after colonization was further eroded. Settler farmers moved into areas previously inhabited by the Khoi and started a new existence for themselves with the aid of the Cape government. In another smallpox epidemic in 1831 in the Cape Province, over 80% of the Griqua communities were also wiped out.

13 February 1960 France tests nuclear bomb in Algeria

On 13 February 1960, France conducted its first nuclear test at

Reggane, an oasis town in southern Algeria. The war for the North African country's independence had been ongoing since 1954 and French President Charles de Gaulle was keen to show the world that France belonged at the top table of military powers. This first French atomic bomb, named Gerboise Bleue after the blue of the tricolour flag and a small desert animal in the Sahara, was detonated in the Algerian desert. It released over four times the amount of energy as that of the US bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Between 1960 and 1966, France detonated 17 bombs in the Algerian Sahara. Contrary to Paris's assertions, radiation from the first bomb alone had covered a region that ran from Algeria to Libya to Mauritania and on to Mali and Nigeria, and as far north as Spain and Italy. (middleeasteye.net)

13 February 1982 Neil Aggett buried in Johannesburg



Neil Aggett, former organiser of the Food and Canning Workers Union and African Food and Canning Workers Union, was buried in Johannesburg. It was estimated that 15 000 people attended his funeral. His labour organisation issued a call on 11 February 1982, that on the day of his burial, all workers should stay away from work. About 7 000 FOSATU workers at

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the Uitenhage branch of Volkswagen responded. The presence of police did not stop mourners from reaffirming the struggle for which Aggett died by singing revolutionary songs. Aggett's funeral was filmed as a symbol of the impact he had on people through labour issues and his community work. He became the 51st person to die in police detention, and was the first White person to die under those circumstances since 1963. The inquest into his death is currently under way.

13 February 1995 Constitutional Court inaugurated



South Africa's first Constitutional Court is inaugurated, signaling the country's transition from a parliamentary to a constitutional democracy. It is the apex court of the country, and Judge Arthur Chaskalson became its first President.

13 February 2005 Ladysmith Black Mambazo wins Grammy Award

Ladysmith black Mambazo won their second Grammy Award on 13 February 2005 for their album *Wenyukela*. A hybrid of the album was released in the United States and went platinum, helping the group win the award. The group through their leader, Joseph Tshabalala made the genres of isicathamiya and Mbube a lasting and living legacy.

13 February 2019 African Fine Coffees conference

Rwanda hosts 2000 coffee growers at Kigali's African Fine Coffees conference. The country's coffee has been winning awards in the specialty coffee categories, and accounts for over 50% of the country's coffee production.

14 February 1961 The Rand replaces the British pound

The Union of South Africa introduces its own currency, the Rand (ZAR) replacing the British pound since the latter colonized the country in the 17th century. Under apartheid, the Rand had the head of Jan van Riebeeck, the original settler and colonizer. Since 2012, all Rand notes have the face of Nelson Mandela, father of our democracy.

14 February 1976 Second Battle of Amgala

In this battle, the Polisario Front of Western Sahara wins its first major victory against Morocco to liberate the territory. In 1975, the International Court of Justice ruled that the Saharawi people must decide on their independence and right to self-determination, denied by Morocco ever-since, despite OAU, African Union and United Nation resolutions in support of the implementation of the judgement.

14 February 1981 Samora Machel pledges solidarity after Matola Raid

President Samora Machel of Mozambique pledged solidarity with the South African people, in reaction to the Matola massacre on 30 January 1981, where

more than 14 uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) cadres were killed. Machel, together with the African National Congress (ANC) President, Oliver Tambo, was addressing mourners at the funeral of the victims of the Matola raid in Mozambique killed by South African security forces. The victims were Lancelot Hadebe, Mandla Daka, Daniel Molokisi, Steven Ngcobo, Vusumzi Ngwema, Thabang Bookolane, Krishna Rabilal, Themba Dimba, Motso Mokgabudi, Collin Khumalo, Levinson Mankankaza, Albert Mahutso, Mduduzi Guma, William Khanyile and Vuyani Mavuso. Mavuso was kidnapped during the raid, and was later executed when he refused to cooperate with apartheid security agencies and betray his comrades.

14 February 2021 First African woman to lead WTO



Nigerian finance minister and former foreign minister, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala becomes the first woman and first African to serve as Director General of the World Trade Organisation.

15 February 1900 Siege of Kimberley ended

During the Second Anglo-Boer War, a 123 day siege was held

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over Kimberley, which came to an end on this day. After numerous attacks by the Boer commandos firing 5, 800 shells, the town suffered only 134 casualties among armed defenders and twenty-one civilians, but some 1 500 people, mostly Coloureds and Blacks, died of famine and disease. Infant mortality rate during the 4 months of the siege rose to 67, 1% among Whites and 91.2% among Coloureds and Blacks.

15 February 1960 Oldest Bank trade union in Commonwealth formed

The South African Society of Bank Officials (SASBO), now an affiliate of COSATU was formed in secret in February 1916, the first in the British Commonwealth of its nature. *"In the earliest days, the founders met in absolute secrecy and it was necessary to produce proof of identity before admittance to a meeting."* SASBO started as a whites-only union, but became more non-racial since the 1980s. Though started in banks, it is now called SASBO – the Finance Union – with a presence in banks, insurance companies, credit unions and other financial institutions.

15 February 1964 ILO suspends South Africa

The governing body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) meeting in Geneva, votes in favour of suspending South Africa from participation in its Annual General Conferences. The resolution is passed by thirty-two votes to fourteen with two abstentions.

15-21 February 1986 Six Day War in Alexandria

The 1986 six-day war in Alexan-

dra was sparked by the tear-gassing of mourners after a funeral, sparking running battles between police and youth. Several arrests were made and 27 people were killed.

15 February 1986 University of Pretoria admits first 20 Black students

The university which was formed in 1908 and remained exclusively white. On 15 February 1986, the university admitted its first twenty black students. It later opened a campus in Hammanskraal for black students, and in 2004 merged with the defunct Vista University's Mamelodi Campus. Today the university has three languages of communication, Afrikaans, English and Sepedi.

15 February 1995 President Mandela announced he will not stand for re-election

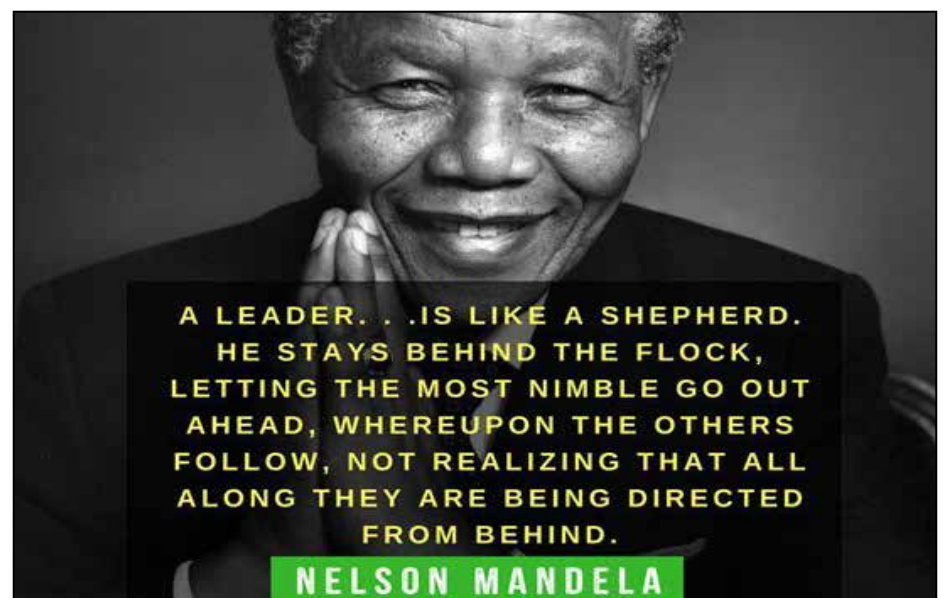
President Nelson Mandela on this day announced he would not be standing for re-election in 1999. Mandela, who was released from prison in February 1990, became the first democratic president of

the Republic of South Africa in April 1994. His announcement meant stepping down as African National Congress's (ANC) and as the country's president. The struggle icon took over as ANC president from Oliver Reginald Tambo in 1991. Thabo Mbeki, his Deputy President in government replaced him as president of the ANC in 1997 and as State President in 1999.

15 February 2018 Parliament elects 5th President of the Republic



ANC President, Cyril Ramaphosa was elected unopposed as the fifth President of democratic South Africa by the National Assembly on 15 February 2018.



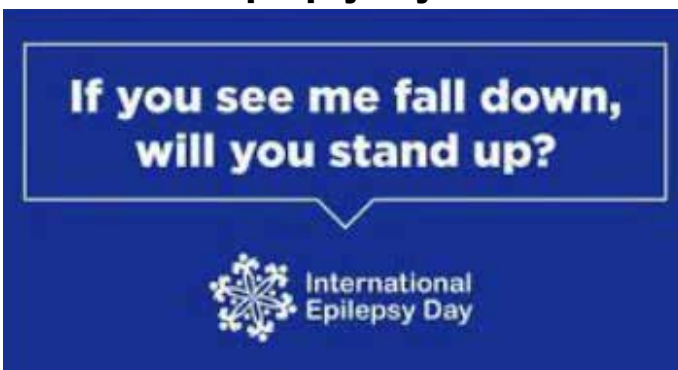
INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

8–14 February 2025

Source: www.un.org, www.au.int, *The Africa Fact Book (2020)*, www.daysoftheyear.com

8 February

International Epilepsy Day



An estimated 65 million people are living with epilepsy around the world. To have epilepsy is to have a tendency to have recurring seizures. Anyone can have a seizure, if the brain is exposed to a strong enough stimulus. It is not necessarily a life-long diagnosis. South Africa also has national awareness day on epilepsy on 21 June each year.

9 February

Africa Safer Internet Day

Safer internet day celebrates how the internet can inform, connect and inspire all of us, but also on the importance of a safe internet, safe from bullying, predators, abuse, racism, homophobia, sexism and misogyny. In 2019, over 71% of children were online, according to the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF). At the same time, due to work and other pressures, parents and guard-



ians have less and less time, and often the knowledge to guide their children's engagements with the internet. With increasing digitalization, children are more able to get access to education, to connect to peers and to use the enormous potential the internet provides to them. This awareness day is aimed at young people, to help them know what to trust online, supporting young people to question, and to challenge and change the online world for the better. In most of Africa, it also focuses on access to the internet and data.

10 February

World Pulses Day

Pulses, also known as legumes, are the edible seeds of leguminous plants cultivated for food. Dried beans, lentils and peas are the most commonly known and consumed types of pulses. Staple dishes and cuisines from across the world feature pulses, from hummus made of chickpeas, to beans or to dhal made of peas or lentils. Pulses are packed with nutrients and have a high protein content. They are also low in fat and rich in soluble fiber, which can lower cholesterol and help control blood sugar levels. The nitrogen-fixing properties of pulses improve soil fertility, which increases and extends the productivity of the farmland.

11 February

International Day of Women and Girls in Science

The day celebrates the unrecognised role that women through the ages played in the sciences, and to promote their current contributions and involvement in the science. Throughout the world, women make up 53% of bachelor and masters graduates and 43% of PhD graduates, but only 38% of them pursue careers as researchers and only 30% in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Globally, female students' enrolment is particularly low in ICT (3 per cent), natural science, mathe-

SOUTH AFRICA IN NUMBERS



matics and statistics (5 per cent) and in engineering, manufacturing and construction (8 per cent). The African Union has been campaigning for more women and girls in science, including an annual award for the top African women scientist. Since 2011, there has been an increase in women researchers in South Africa, Egypt, Morocco, Senegal, Nigeria, Rwanda, Cameroon and Ethiopia. According to UN Women “*Science reflects the people who make it. The world needs science, and science needs women and girls.*” The global campaign is therefore for

- More women in STEM
- More role models for girls
- More girls choose studies in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
- More innovators with diverse backgrounds
- Better solutions to global challenges.

13 February World Radio Day



World Radio Day celebrates radio as part of humanity’s history of 112 years of radio. As the world changes, so does radio. South Africa has a very vibrant radio sector, with audience growth from 34.6 million in 2014 to 38.2 million in 2018. These are across 19 SABC radio stations, 21 radio stations and 264 community radio stations. Nine of the top ten stations are public broadcasters in African lan-

guages, with Ukhozi FM pulling over 7.5 million listeners. Radio remains one of the most trusted and accessible media in the world.

14 February International Book Giving Day

The day is dedicated to increasing children’s access to and enthusiasm for books. In South Africa, the Reading Panel, convened by former Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka aims to ensure all children can read by 2030. Having books at home and access to books at school are important for the development of a love of reading amongst children. Participate in the day by giving a book as a gift, donate books to your local library or a school library, support organisations that distribute books, connect with others using the hashtag #bookgivingday.

15 February International Childhood Cancer Day

Learn, Heal, Thrive

This February, help us honour International Childhood Cancer Day by supporting children and young people affected by cancer through education.



According to Child Cancer International, every year over 400,000 children are diagnosed with cancer, with survival rates ranging from 80% in high income countries and 20% in low income countries. The day raises awareness of childhood cancers and support to survivors and families.

15 February World Hippo Day

Hippopotamus – an old Greek name for river horse – are the world’s third largest mammal (only blue whales and African elephant are larger), yet are in danger. They are only found in Africa, at home in over 30 African countries. In the wild they live up to 50 years, and are herbivores.

VACANCIES

JOB ADVERTISEMENT ANC MEMBERSHIP PRACTITIONER

Internal Job Advertisement

Advertisement Date: February 05, 2025

Closing Date: February 12, 2025

Job Summary:

The African National Congress (ANC) invites applications from suitably qualified and experienced individuals for the position of ANC Membership Practitioner. The successful candidate will provide support to members on membership functions and management, resolve membership-related challenges, and prepare reports for management.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide support to members on membership functions and management
- Resolve membership-related challenges
- Generate QR codes for Branch General Meetings (BGMs) and Branch Bi-Annual General Meetings (BBGMs)
- Process and analyze BGMs/BBGMs planned schedules
- Access and monitor the scanning process of BGMs/BBGMs
- Prepare BGMs/BBGMs verification reports for management
- Collaborate with Provincial and Regional membership officers, Provincial Organizers, and ANC National Organizers on membership-related matters
- Provide accreditation and registration administration for ANC and ANC Leagues conferences
- Analyze membership data and produce reports for management
- Conduct training for members, branch secretaries, and regional and provincial membership officers.

Requirements:

- Grade 12 certificate
- Basic computer skills
- Data analysis skills
- Report writing
- 3 years of experience in membership operations
- Basic understanding of ANC membership and structures
- ANC Member in Good standing

Application Submission:

Only applications that meet the above criteria will be considered. Interested applicants should submit the following documents via email:

- Covering letter
- Comprehensive curriculum vitae
- Certified copies of qualifications
- Certified copy of ID
- Proof of ANC membership

Email applications to: **Fikile Moahlodi** (hr@anc1912.org.za)

Tel: 011 376 8210

Enquiries: Fikile Moahlodi

JOB ADVERTISEMENT COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Applications are invited from suitable candidates with appropriate qualifications and experience for the following position:

Job Title:	Communications Manager
Reporting Line:	National Spokesperson
Job Type:	Permanent
Organisation:	African National Congress
Unit:	Department of Communication & Information Publicity(DCIP)
Location:	Chief Albert Luthuli House, Marshalltown
Date of Advert:	February 05, 2025
Closing Date:	February 12, 2025

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Communications Manager plays a critical role in the organisation as operations head of the Department of Communications & Information Publicity.

Media Management

- Media monitoring

Communication Management & Strategy

- To oversee development and implementation of the communications strategy within the ANC
- Responsible for operational functioning of the Department of Communications, Information & Publicity
- To ensure that the communications structures in all provinces are operational
- To oversee communications work in regions, sub-regions and branches
- Provide support to NEC Communications Committee

Content Development & Research

Management and Development

- Managing the staff of the Department of Communication & Information Publicity, conducting Performance Management and Development System assessments
- Working as part of the Head Quarters Information Forum
- Managing the training and performance management and development initiatives of the Department, instilling discipline, motivating and resolving conflicts regularly,
- Controlling the Department's budget by checking that there is no overspending and misuse of the budget and carrying out functions delegated by the National Spokesperson
- Event Management

REQUIREMENTS

- Appropriate undergraduate qualifications or minimum 10 years experience at a senior or executive level position in communication, public relations, stakeholder relations, development communications, marketing political science or journalism role;
- Excellent writing skills with extensive experience in opinion piece writing;
- Sound interpersonal skills and a solid ability to take initiative;
- Advanced computer literacy in Microsoft Office;
- Knowledge of filing and records management systems and procedures;
- Good organising and project management skills;
- Professionalism, good command of English and knowledge of an additional South African official language will be an added advantage;
- Sound institutional communication skills, information management and technology skills;
- Interpersonal and problem-solving skills, attention to detail and analytical skills;
- Demonstrable leadership skills, ability to work as part of a team, provide guidance and build relationships;
- Protocol and diplomacy, integrity and a demonstrated ability to work with complete confidentiality;
- Good understanding of the legislative arm of the State, its functions, rules and procedures;
- Ability to work under deadlines and set priorities;
- Good understanding of ANC ideological orientation, policies and programmes; and
- ANC Membership in good standing

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Only applications that meet the above criteria will be considered. Interested applicants should submit by email a covering letter, comprehensive copy of curriculum vitae, certified copies of qualifications, ID and proof of ANC Membership.

Applications should be emailed to: **Fikile Moahlodi** (hr@anc1912.org.za), Human Resources Department.

Enquiries: Fikile Moahlodi
Tel: 011 376 8210