



ANC PARLIAMENTARY Caucus

Newsletter.

JUL 2025

FREEDOM CHARTER 70TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION



The Freedom Charter contains the fundamental perspective of the vast majority of the people of South Africa of the kind of liberation that all of us are fighting for. Hence it is not merely the Freedom Charter of the African National Congress and its allies. Rather it is the Charter of the people of South Africa for liberation ... Because it came from the people, it remains still a people's Charter, the one basic political statement of our goals to which all genuinely democratic and patriotic forces of South Africa adhere

President Oliver Tambo

FOREWORD BY CHIEF WHIP

The People shall govern: The Charter's life after the achievement of democracy.

There is no greater demonstration of a commitment to build a better society where civil and socioeconomic rights are protected and upheld than through the exercise of the right to vote. Voting is the highest form of democracy inscribed in our constitution; the right to vote provides people with



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**CHIEF WHIP OF THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

the authority to elect their government.

It took the collaboration, bravery and sacrifice of individuals from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities to win the right to vote for all South African citizens.

It was a beautiful sunny day, June 26, 1955, when 3 000 delegates held the Congress of the People in Kliptown, Soweto, and adopted the Freedom Charter.

The Freedom Charter inspired a paradigm shift in thinking about the democratic rights of Black South Africans and their protection in contrast to the brutality of apartheid laws. However, the government intensified its fight against the liberation movements and their allies.

The ANC was banned and forced to operate clandestinely in the underground. The Freedom Charter was circulated covertly as an inspirational and aspirational document, widely used to attract supporters and mobilise people to back the ANC and the liberation struggle.

The document provided a framework and a roadmap towards the envisioned freedom and democracy. It laid the foundation for the ANC's principles of inclusivity, equality, and a better life for all. The ANC consistently used the Freedom Charter to guide its approach to the constitutional guidelines while preparing for a democratic transition, which contributed to the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in 1996.

70 years later, the Freedom Charter continues to inspire hope and illuminate the hearts of many South Africans. It has shaped the South African development path since the dawn of democracy and a vision of a future National Democratic Society.

South Africa is now a constitutional democratic country with an entrenched Bill of Rights embedding all the Freedom Charter demands.



NEW YEAR, NEW EFFORT

As we honour the Freedom Charter, we also reflect on 31 years of democracy and the ongoing struggle for social transformation. The ANC government has achieved some of the core demands of the Freedom Charter. The state has built 4.3 million subsidised housing units since 1994 and transferred them to residents as freehold properties.

The state has since sought to put in place a legislative and policy framework designed to transform South Africa, and we are the generation that has witnessed the implementation of free education for underprivileged learners. Furthermore, the government has added a child support grant to help millions have food security and a school nutrition program that feeds 9 million learners daily. Millions of students have received NSFAS funding to pursue their academic studies and get accommodation

at TVET colleges and universities. The recent signing of the Expropriation Bill into law was a significant step in restoring dignity to Black South Africans who were dispossessed of their land.

Furthermore, legislative interventions, such as the Basic Education Law Amendment Act (BELA) and the Employment Equity Act, among others, are intended to give substance to the socioeconomic rights enshrined in the Constitution.

The lives of South Africans have undeniably progressed, but along the way, we have experienced challenges in implementing some of the demands of the Freedom Charter to advance social transformation •

Aluta Continua

THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER AND THE EMANCIPATORY VALUE OF THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN

LESSONS FOR THE RENEWAL AND UNITY OF THE ANC IN THE CURRENT EPOCH OF OUR DEMOCRACY

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter, a foundational document of South Africa's democracy, adopted in 1955. The charter, born from the Congress of the People, outlines the vision of a just, equal, and democratic society, emphasising rights and freedoms for all South Africans. It continues to inspire the nation's constitution and development plans, particularly in the pursuit of an inclusive democracy and a better life for all.

The 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter occurs shortly after the historic 2024 national and provincial elections in South Africa. These elections are significant because, for the first time in 30 years since the 1994 democratic breakthrough, the African National Congress has experienced a major strategic setback with its electoral support falling below 50 per cent, leading to the formation of the Government of National Unity.



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**CHIEF WHIP OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
PROVINCES**

In his public acceptance of the election results, the President of the ANC, Comrade Cyril Ramaphosa, stated, among other things, that the people have spoken! This demonstrates the African National Congress's strong commitment and respect for the will of the people. As the Freedom Charter declares,; The people shall gov-

ern, and no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people.

Accordingly, these election results signify a fundamental realignment in South African politics, shifting the balance of power away from the revolutionary movement led by the African National Congress. In this context, two important points are worth noting. First, the ANC has historically never considered the balance of power as fixed, but rather as a product and result of the people's struggles.

This leads to a second observation: whether the current political realignment and the attendant balance of forces will remain a permanent feature of the South African political landscape into the distant future, beyond the 2029 national elections. This is not based on speculation or wishful thinking, but on the verdict of our people. It demands greater urgency in internal regrouping, renewal, and reconnecting with the masses, guided by clear think-

ing and a stronger sense of purpose. As succinctly expressed by the late O R Tambo:

“The future is bright, the end glorious, but the intervening period ahead dark and bitter, and will only find glory in the art of struggle”.

We are the sole liberation movement on the entire African continent with a collective heritage of struggles spanning over 114 years and essential lessons on transforming strategic setbacks into revolutionary gains. We remain, by far, the largest political party in parliament, despite the notable decline in our electoral support.

This not only sends shockwaves down the spines of our adversaries but also proves that no political party has yet been born that can match the African National Congress, both in terms of political stature and popular support. To borrow from O R Tambo: there is no mortal force that can destroy the ANC, except the ANC itself.

This presents a compelling argument that, as we mark the 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter, we take a moment to step back, pause, and critically reflect on the lessons of how it has reshaped the course and hastened the pace of the national democratic revolution towards the 1994 democratic breakthrough.

The Evolution, Meaning and Emancipatory Values of the People Shall Govern

The Freedom Charter was adopted amidst two contradictory yet interconnected global political developments that have permanently influenced the current global political-economic order. The first was the Cold War, centred on fierce ideological battles for international influence between the United States of America, led by the capitalist bloc, and the USSR, led by the socialist bloc. The second development was characterised by the heroic victories of anti-colonial struggles across many parts of the world: Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

In the South African domestic context, three interconnected developments followed: the official establishment of the apartheid system by the Nationalist Party in 1948, and the banning of the Communist Party of South Africa in 1950. Its implementation led to the High Treason Trial of 1956, in which 156 leaders of the Congress Alliance were charged for their role in its drafting.

It differs from many other political documents in South Africa and around the world, not only in its emancipatory and transformative vision but also in the all-inclusive participatory process that supported its drafting and adoption. It is indeed a living people's charter created by them, which is why many paid the ultimate price with their lives in its defence.

The Freedom Charter was not only fiercely opposed by the apartheid government and its Western imperialist allies, but also by a faction of Pan-Africanists within the ANC that later broke away from

the ANC to establish the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania in 1959, and later the Black Consciousness Movement, along with some sections of the left. Despite the banning and fierce propaganda onslaught, the apartheid government did not succeed in silencing it.

The first clause, ‘The people shall govern,’ emphasises the central role of the people as the architects of their future. This slogan, ‘Forward with the people’s struggle for people’s power,’ was coined by the United Democratic Front in the 1980s. It inspired new forms of organisation, political mobilisation, and militant mass actions, where people took their future firmly into their own hands.

At the core of the new forms of organisation and political mobilisation was the establishment of people’s organs for people’s power. This included people’s courts, street, zonal, and area committees, mass sectoral organisations, civic organisations, and a militant trade union movement, as well as rent boycotts and mass stayaways that rendered apartheid unworkable and South Africa ungovernable.

The slogan of the people’s struggle for people’s power fostered and deepened three revolutionary traditions within the mass democratic movement: the culture of democracy and accountability, unity in action, and the deep connection between the higher structures and lower structures, as well as between the structures of the organisation as a whole and the masses. This fostered the strategic coherence and the capacity of the organisation to respond decisively to the

needs of the people, thus leaving no space for a leadership vacuum. It is these revolutionary traditions, inspired by the vision of 'people shall govern' and the people's struggle for power, that earned the African National Congress the trust of the people, culminating in its landslide electoral victory in 1994 and subsequent elections.

The Continuities and Shifts in the Revolutionary Traditions of the Freedom Charter in the Post-apartheid Era

The ANC Strategy and Tactics adopted at the 50th national conference, entitled "All power to the people – Building on the foundations of a better life", reaffirmed as the strategic tasks of the current epoch of the national democratic revolution:

- the building and strengthening of the ANC as a movement that organises and leads the people in the task of social transformation;
- deepening our democracy and culture of human rights and mobilising the people to take an active part in changing their lives for the better;
- strengthening the hold of the democratic movement on state power, transforming the state machinery to serve the cause of social change;
- pursuing economic growth, development and redistribution in such a way as to improve the people's quality of life; and,
- working with progressive forces throughout the world to promote and defend our transformation, advance Africa's renaissance and build a new world order.

As part of deepening democracy

and motivating people to actively participate in transforming their lives, the democratic state, led by the ANC, established popular organs of people's power to ensure strong control by the people over key state functions. This includes hospital boards, Ward committees, school governing bodies, Community Police Forums, and democratic forums for public involvement, such as government imbizos, Integrated Development Plan community meetings, and Taking Parliament to the People.

Despite these milestones, successive conferences of the ANC noted the poor implementation of these resolutions, which led to a drift between the ANC structure and communities, on one hand, and between elected public officials and the electorate, on the other. The limited capacity of ANC structures to serve as sites of community struggles for fundamental change and socio-economic transformation, and the social distance between elected leaders and the people, created space for other forces hostile to the ANC to exploit the legitimate grievances of the people and mobilise against the ANC and the democratic state.

The declining capacity of the state, particularly local governments, to deliver basic services to communities, the spread of public sector corruption, and the worsening levels of poverty, unemployment, and inequality have triggered a rupture in spontaneous, violent sectoral and grassroots protests. According to one of the seminal studies by Professor Peter Alexander, South Africa has gained a global reputation as the world capital of violent demonstrations. The extensive body of research on

the July 2021 mass uprising that left over 350 people dead in Kwa-Zulu-Natal and parts of Gauteng is replete with an abiding consensus that, while this violence was an act of opportunistic criminality, its intensity and momentum were fuelled by miserable conditions of poverty and unemployment among the vast majority of our people. July 2021 will go down in the annals of history as one of the supreme tests of our movement's capacity to stand true to the five critical tasks outlined above.

What are the Lessons for Internal Regrouping, Renewal and Unity of the African National Congress?

The enduring lessons from the strategic setbacks of the past three decades highlight a growing disconnection or social distance between the ANC as the leading mass party of revolution and the people. This includes the demobilisation of ANC structures from active community struggles, whether by omission or design, alongside poor service delivery, escalating levels of poverty, unemployment, inequalities, and corruption. Various official reports of the African National Congress confirm these setbacks. The persistence of these challenges, including subpar service delivery and corruption, is internal to the ANC and cannot be blamed on external factors.

At the heart of these setbacks are, among other issues, the poor state and capacity of ANC structures to monitor the implementation of the government's transformative policies, as well as the limited capacity of the state, particularly in project planning, management, and engineering. To quote the organisational report by former Secretary-General of the ANC,

Kgalema Motlanthe, to the first ANC National General Council in Port Elizabeth in 2002, the ANC branches have been transformed into spheres of influence for factional battles at the expense of their core strategic role as sites of community struggles.

The persistence of this has fostered a troubling perception that the ANC has moved away from its core revolutionary values and traditions as a trusted people's vanguard, towards a narrow electoral machine that only becomes active during electoral conferences. As former President Mbeki asserts, this has attracted lumpen proletarians within the dominant ranks of the ANC, who work tirelessly to turn it into a theatre of palace wars for personal glory and gain.

From the onset of the democratic transition, the ANC has always maintained a clear line on the strategic imperatives to master the art of forging mutual interdependence between the party, the state and the masses in pursuance of the strategic vision of the people shall govern, and the consolidation of the people's struggles for people's power. At the core of this art should be a shared appreciation of the strategic task of the ANC to mobilise all sections of society behind a shared vision for fundamental change and transformation, whilst strengthening the capacity of the state to fulfil its constitutional tasks without micromanaging it.

The failure and subjective weaknesses of the ANC as a leading mass party of revolution can translate into government-wide failures. The capacity of the ANC at all levels to strengthen gov-

ernment, in partnership with the people, with consistency, discipline, and strategic clarity and purpose, will go a long way towards reclaiming the past glory of the ANC as a trusted vanguard of the people in the pursuit of the national democratic revolution's victory.

Reclaiming the mass popular movement character of the ANC for popular transformation in the current epoch of the national democratic revolution should no longer be relegated to the periphery; instead, it should find programmatic expression and priority on the agenda of every branch, region, and province of the ANC. Critical to this task is the presence, influence, and leadership of the ANC in all sites of community struggles. This should include:

- Fighting crime, gender-based violence and corruption;
- Environmental cleaning campaigns;
- Taking the Girl and Boy child to school;
- Supporting the weak and vulnerable in the communities;
- Leading the campaigns and struggles to hold the elected public officials accountable;
- Mobilising and leading campaigns against xenophobia, homophobia and other forms of social prejudices;
- Building and strengthening people's organs for people's power, like street committees, Community police forums, public transport commuters forums, community-based people's hospitals and clinics committees; community-based sectoral report back forums by councillors, MECs and Ministers on their executive undertakings.

This goes a long way, not only in reclaiming the popular traditions of the Freedom Charter - the people shall govern and the people's struggles for people's power - but also in reclaiming the glorious past of the ANC as a trusted vanguard of the people in the pursuit of the national democratic revolution's victory. Achieving these will require robust internal systems and operational re-engineering of the ANC branch.

Critical to this is the redefinition of the norms and standards of a branch and a member of the ANC in good standing, which is currently a work in progress as part of organisational renewal. This redefinition should include a matrix of key indicators against which the good standing of an ANC branch should be measured.

This should include, among others, the service delivery profile of the ward within which the ANC branch is located, a portfolio of evidence on how the ANC branch, together with the community, has intervened, the campaigns that the ANC branch has undertaken, and knowledge of, and partnerships with, key community-based organisations in the ward.

Among the enduring lessons of 21st-century democratic theory and practice is that no political party can win in democratic elections unless it has already won in the minds and hearts of the electorate on the streets•

Forward to the people's struggle for people's power!!

The ANC Lives, The ANC Leads!!

ASSESSING THE ANC'S COMMITMENT TO THE CHARTER'S PRINCIPLES

The African National Congress (ANC) has forged a deep and historically significant bond with the 'Freedom Charter', adopted in 1955. This Charter powerfully encapsulates a vision for a democratic, non-racial South Africa and stands as a vital cornerstone for the anti-apartheid movement.

Since the ANC took on the mantle of governance in 1994, a vibrant and meaningful dialogue has emerged regarding its commitment to the enduring principles of the Charter and the dynamic evolution of 'mass mobilization' across the nation.

Key Principles of the Freedom Charter:

- The people shall govern.
- All national groups shall have equal rights.
- The land shall be shared among those who work it.
- The people shall share in the country's wealth.
- There shall be work and security.
- Education shall be free, compulsory, and equal for all.



Instances of Alignment with the Charter:

Political Rights: Since the transition to democracy in 1994, South Africa has championed a vibrant democratic, multi-party system, where universal suffrage and regular elections bring to life the powerful principle that "the people shall govern."

Legal and Civil Rights: The adoption of the Constitution in 1996 unequivocally enshrines equality, human rights, and freedoms for all citizens, powerfully reflecting the Charter's commitment to non-racialism and equal rights.

Access to Services: The government has made commendable strides in expanding access to es-

sential services, including water, electricity, housing, healthcare, and education, particularly in historically marginalized communities.

Black Economic Empowerment (BEE): Meaningful initiatives have been introduced to enhance the participation of black South Africans in the economy, reinforcing the principles of equity and inclusion.

Considerations of Divergence from the Charter:

Economic Inequality and Wealth Redistribution: Despite the strides made with BEE, persistent concerns surrounding wealth concentration prompt essential discussions about whether the economy has transformed sufficiently to embody the Charter's vision of shared prosperity.

Land Reform: The pace and effectiveness of land redistribution efforts remain critical issues, with numerous critiques suggesting that the principle "The land shall be shared among those who work it" requires urgent and focused attention.



Corruption and Governance:

Governance challenges, including state capture scandals and instances of corruption—particularly during the Zuma administration—have raised crucial questions about the realization of the principle that “the people shall govern,” indicating a concerning shift in power dynamics.

Education and Health: Ongoing concerns regarding the adequacy of public education and health services emphasize the need for unwavering commitment to the equitable access that the Charter so passionately advocates.

The Evolution of Mass Mobilization in South Africa

Mobilization During Apartheid (1950s–1994):

Grassroots Mobilization: This defining period was marked by an extraordinary level of grassroots activism, encompassing mass protests, boycotts, and worker strikes that were pivotal in resisting apartheid.

- Organizations such as the ANC, UDF, COSATU, and the SACP collaboratively united with communities, fostering a powerful and coordinated front.
- Mobilization during this era was fundamentally tied to the struggle for survival and liberation, fuelled by shared aspirations and a common adversary.

Post-Apartheid Mobilization (1994–Present):

Shift in Mobilization Dynamics: Following the establishment of democracy, mass mobilization has blossomed into a more diverse and decentralized movement.

Continued Civic Engagement: Civic movements continue to thrive, often operating independently or providing constructive critique of the ANC (e.g., Treatment Action Campaign, FeesMustFall).

Emergence of Service Delivery Protests: Growing discontent re-

garding local governance and socioeconomic disparities has sparked frequent protests, often characterized by spontaneity and urgency.

Influence of Social Media and Youth Movements: Platforms like Twitter and Facebook have become powerful instruments for activism, exemplified by movements such as #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall.

While the ANC has achieved significant political and civil advancements that resonate with the principles of the ‘Freedom Charter’, critical opportunities for growth remain in areas such as economic transformation, land reform, and governance integrity. Concurrently, ‘mass mobilization’ has evolved from a structured resistance framework into a vibrant, diverse, and issue-specific activism that powerfully reflects the dynamic public sentiment regarding the post-apartheid landscape and the essential role of government•

THE FREEDOM CHARTER AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS



On June 26, 1955, thousands of freedom-loving South Africans from all racial groups gathered at Kliptown in Johannesburg for the Congress of the People. The gathering was preceded by extensive consultation with ordinary people about their vision of a free and democratic society, and that vision was expressed in the Freedom Charter document.

Despite the Black majority being oppressed and robbed of their birthrights, land, and liberties by the apartheid system, which was declared a crime against humanity by the United Nations, our people



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chose justice, peace, equality, and reconciliation instead of revenge against their oppressors. Our forebears chose inclusiveness and equality and affirmed

everyone's humanity when they declared that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people."

We, in the African National Congress, understand the Freedom Charter as a universal document, containing rights that are universally recognised, though not always realised; it also expresses demands and measures to address historical injustices peculiar to lived experiences under apartheid.

The Freedom Charter's impact is clearly seen in our rights-based constitution, which includes not just civil and political rights but also economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as solidarity and collective rights. Our forebears understood civil and political rights as meaningless if basic needs are not met; the right to vote and the right to freedom. The constitution guarantees every South African the right to have access to adequate housing, the right to health care, food, water, and social security, among other important rights, and our ANC-led government has made substantial progress towards realising these rights.

The human settlements sector has been at the centre of substantial progress in realising the declaration of the Freedom Charter that "there shall be housing, security, and comfort for all" of our people. Since 1994, the ANC-led government has implemented progressive policies and programmes as part of the Freedom Charter's continuous journey to achieve full humanity for the historically oppressed Black majority.

In the African National Congress, we consider the Freedom Charter not only as a living document, but also as being part of our journey towards improving the lives of our people.

Regarding housing, our ANC-led government has successfully delivered nearly 5 million fully subsidised houses, which is equivalent to a quarter of the formal houses reported in the 2022 Census.

Recognising the importance of dismantling the apartheid spatial legacy, our government has identified more than one hundred and thirty priority development areas in which it partners with the private sector to build new human settlements that will enable residents to live closer to areas with economic activities and social amenities, such as schools, health facilities, and job opportunities, as well as access to adequate and affordable rental and social housing.

The human settlements sector has also embarked on a comprehensive review of the policies and legislation regulating the sector to respond to the persistent challenges it faces, as there are still many of our people without adequate housing, and the proposed policy and legislation promise radical and far-reaching implications in recognition that the right to access housing is not only for the vulnerable but is universal.

Our ANC-led government has already begun implementing the policy proposal, including the First Home Finance program, which targets households with a combined income exceeding R3500 but less than R22000 per month; these households are commonly referred to as the missing middle.

Housing finance has been a challenge not only for historically disadvantaged households but also for Black-owned housing developers, and in response, our government has initiated a program to convert the National Housing Finance Corporation into a Human Settlement Development Bank to

finance housing projects across the country, thereby expanding access to housing for all.

As part of achieving the aspirations contained in the Freedom Charter that "all people shall have the right to live where they choose [and] be decently housed," our ANC-led government has prioritised the upgrading of informal settlements, where they are built, and focused on the provision of serviced residential sites as part of addressing apartheid's spatial legacy, making provisions for those who can afford to build their own homes but also addressing land hunger, which results in land grabs and invasions.

All these efforts highlight the importance of the Freedom Charter not only as containing the aspirations of our forebears but also as a universal framework and a continuous journey that responds to the lived realities of our people. Early in our democracy, we focused on RDP housing for vulnerable groups but later expanded to include the working people, now the missing middle. The journey to realise the vision of the Freedom Charter continues.

We will continue, within the limitations of resources, to strive to give dignity to our people by ensuring that they have shelter over their heads •

REFLECTIONS ON THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER

A Legacy of Unity and Ongoing Struggle

I. The Freedom Charter's Historic Significance

The 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter marks a defining milestone in South Africa's journey toward democracy. In 1955, people across racial, religious, and ethnic lines united to articulate a shared vision for a just nation. This landmark document remains the foundational blueprint for the African National Congress (ANC) and progressive forces today.

II. Clause 2: The Bedrock of Equality

The Charter's second clause—"All national groups shall have equal rights"—holds profound historical weight. Its urgency was forged through centuries of resistance against colonial land dispossession, exemplified by struggles such as the Salt River War (1785–1803 where Khoi, San, and Xhosa warriors resisted Dutch dispossession) These sacrifices, where countless lives were lost fighting foreign subjugation, underscore the clause's enduring moral imperative.

We stand on the Shoulders of Giants. The sacrifices of figures like Lillian Ngoyi, Z.K. Matthews, and thousands of unsung activists birthed this document. Their courage made today's freedoms possible—a debt we honour through action.



CDE SW DAVIDS

III. Progress Realised, Not Granted

Today, freedoms like unrestricted movement—unbound by skin colour—stand as testament to this legacy. These rights, earned through relentless struggle, must never be taken for granted. We stand on the shoulders of giants who sacrificed everything for national unity.

IV. Contemporary Challenges:

Vigilance Against Division

Despite progress, a minority clings to ill-gotten privilege and perpetuates false narratives portraying South Africa as a "race-baiting society" seeking to eliminate white people. Such claims ignore our Constitution—a global benchmark for minority protection—whose preamble and principles directly inherit the Charter's vision.

Reciprocity as a Civic Duty

Minority advocacy groups (e.g., AfriForum and its subsidiaries) must recognize that their rights exist within a framework of mutual responsibility. The tolerance extended to them by society demands reciprocal respect for transformative justice. No group holds "superhuman" status above the collective good.

V. Rejecting Chauvinism, Upholding Unity

We must guard against national chauvinism exploited by factions seeking to divide the nation along territorial or ethnic lines, branding fellow citizens as "foreigners." The Freedom Charter provides the antidote:

Unite all who embrace its inclusive vision.

Isolate those advancing divisive agendas.

VI. Conclusion:

The Unfinished Journey

The Charter remains our compass. As we commemorate 70 years, we reaffirm our commitment to its call for equality, justice, and shared belonging. Let us honour past sacrifices by confronting present injustices—demanding both rights and responsibilities from every sector of society•

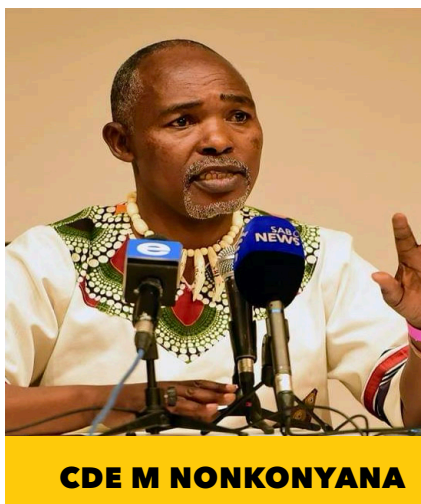
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70th ANNIVERSARY OF FREEDOM CHARTER AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SOUTH AFRICA'S CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNANCE

Introduction

26 June 2025 marked 70th Anniversary since the Congress of the people assembled at Kliptown, Johannesburg, South Africa and adopted set of fundamental freedoms known as the Freedom Charter for a new democratic South Africa.

I deem it necessary in paying tribute to the adoption of the Freedom Charter ("Charter") at that historic event to write this article in celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the adoption of the Charter. In doing so I intend to critically evaluate what we have achieved as the country since its adoption with specific reference to the influence of the Charter in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and in the governance of a new democratic state. I hope that this article will inspire us to remain within the parameters set by the Congress of the People in our determination to retain total independence.



Background

It is important to know and understand what the situation in South Africa was before the Colonialists came. Our history tells us that our beloved country being part of the African continent, was the country of "milk and honey" meaning we had our systems of governance, enough food production for all and having peaceful co-existence. Things fell apart when Colonialists came!

The people of this ,our beloved country, inspired by the spirit of our forebears who fought against Colonialists since the 16th Century took the land of our forebears by force and robbed them of the God given right to freedom, exploitation of natural resources , system of governance, right to self -determination etc, decided to convene the Congress of the People at the now heritage site at Kliptown , Johannesburg in Gauteng Province of the Republic of South Africa.

It is important to understand that it was an initiative to galvanise all the people of South Africa to unite and achieve a goal of a democratic South Africa.

Significance of celebrating 70th anniversary of Freedom Charter

On 25 June 2025 South Africa celebrated 70th Anniversary of the Charter. We need to pause and look back what South Africa has achieved and benefited from the outcomes of the Charter.

There is no doubt that the Congress emphasised the need for unity in South Africa. It is that necessity that compelled the African National Congress ("ANC"), Pan African Congress ("PAC") and all progressive forces convened United Patriotic Front that preceded the Convention for a Democratic South Africa ("CODESA") that led to a decision to mandate the Constitutional Assembly to adopt a Constitution for a New Democratic South Africa.

Is there any influence of the Freedom Charter in the Republic of South Africa?

South Africa belongs to all those who live in it united in their diversity. We are acutely aboriginal groups regard themselves as 'first nations' etc. When our forebears met at the Congress of the People in Kliptown as alluded above, they declared that South Africa belongs to all who live in it. That decision directed us to disabuse our minds of driving those who happened to be coming from Europe towards the sea to live with us in peace although they dived South Africa on racial and tribal lines. We were having "Europeans only" signs for those who lived in better settlements and having better services and Africans were forced to live in barren homelands, poor townships etc

The influence of the Charter runs like a golden thread throughout the Constitution Act 108 of 1996. The Preamble and the Long title of our Constitution, like all pieces of legislation in South Africa, sets out the objectives of our Constitution and the influence of the Charter albeit incorporating other fundamental rights is apparent. Chapter 2 of the Constitution sets



out Bill of rights and all the rights set out in the Charter are incorporated and expanded to keep pace with latest developments in the civilised world.

The Constitution entrenches the principle of universal adult suffrage and leaves no one in doubt that governance at all spheres of government must be based on the will of the people and entrusted Independent Electoral Commission to administer elections and to certify them as free and fair. Furthermore, bye laws at local sphere and Bills at both Provincial legislatures and Parliament must involve public participation to be valid.

The emergence of many political parties in my view militates against the spirit of the Charter. There is no doubt in my mind that our forebears are not amused as this has divided the will of the masses of our beloved country which has benefitted parties against the National Democratic Revolution established by our forebears since the 16th Century. Unity is the only strength and once we are divided, we are sure to fall as the last elections proved! Chapter 9 of the Constitution provide for State institutions supporting Constitutional Democracy which are independent institutions to guard against any abuse of power by those entrusted with governance of the people.

will enhance the need to find a formula to go back to the basics and be driven by the spirit of our forebears that assisted us prior to the negotiations to unite and advance the interest of the entailing masses of our country

Chapter 8 of the Constitution provides for independence of the judiciary that is entrusted to dispense justice to all without any fear or favour. Independence of judiciary is our guarantee against autocratic rule and anarchy. Again, there is no doubt about the influence of the Charter in its provisions.

We have an independent judiciary that has promoted values espoused in both the Freedom Charter and the Constitution. The Constitutional Court has thus far

delivered judgment promoting values of the Charter as set out in the Constitution. The Court, as well as many other Courts, have jealously guided the necessary independence of the judiciary and delivered judgements protecting the rights of all the people and quashed all pieces of legislation and all executive decisions inconsistent with the Constitution.

However, the breaking into the offices of the Constitutional Court years ago, is an event that signified something worrisome. Furthermore, the recent suggestions that the judiciary is captured is unfortunate. I say so because although to err is human, our judicial system allows for appeals against any judgement one feels is wrong.

The doors of learning have been opened, and again, for the first time in our history, so many schools have been built in traditional communities and are world class. Adult basic Education is provided to many who were denied basic education. Be that as it may, challenges continue as the government is confronted by abject poverty of the centuries and the need for it to provide learners with nutrition and scholar transport remains pivotal.

The need to do more to achieve the aims and objectives of the Freedom Charter

The gains achieved since the advent of our democracy are threatened by apparent divisions that have now emerged as demonstrated by so many political parties who contest elections. This, in my view, is inconsistent with

the desire of the Charter to have one unified voice of the people to advance the ideals set out by our forebears at the Congress the people.

Had we adhered to the objectives of the Freedom Charter, we would not have assisted reactionary forces to divide progressive parties into smaller parties, thereby weakening the solemn declaration of the Charter to fight for those freedoms “side by side” to achieve total independence.

I hope that the National dialogue expected to take place later in the year, will enhance the need to find a formula to go back to the basics and be driven by the spirit of our forebears that assisted us prior to the negotiations to unite and advance the interest of the entailing masses of our country, to have a South Africa that we need and that must better the lives for all!

Conclusion

Let all the people of South Africa unite so that we can secure a bright and prosperous future. We need to capitalize on the achievements we have achieved so far and advance the vision of the Freedom Charter to avoid counter revolutionaries that are rearing their ugly heads which seek to undermine the noble vision of the Freedom Charter.

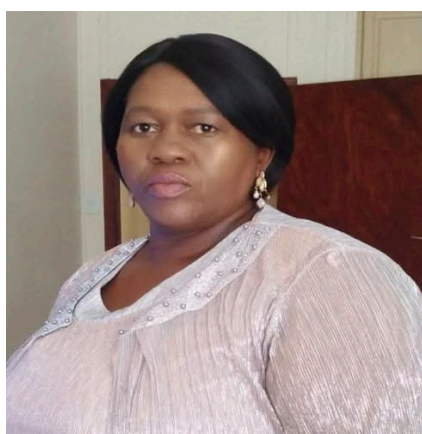
Aluta! Continua!

THE FREEDOM CHARTER AND ITS CALL FOR A NON -RACIAL, NON -SEXIST AND DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA



On June 26th, 1955, the people of South Africa gathered in Kliptown at Soweto, which came to be commonly known as the Congress of the people. This historic event involved approximately 3,000 delegates of all races gathered to articulate a vision of a New South Africa that belongs to all who live in it, both black and white.

The Congress of the people was one of the largest gatherings of our people from all walks of life in South Africa. The gathering was organized to discuss, consolidate and adopt a document that would represent the aspirations of all South Africans regardless of their colour and gender. The Freedom Charter, because of that extensive excise and process, then become a cornerstone of South Africa's democratic journey, serving as a foundational document for the African National Congress and a blueprint for an equal, non -racial,



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non-sexist, democratic, and prosperous South Africa. The gathering itself was never without challenges, as apartheid government viewed it with suspicion and police harassment occurred during the gathering. Despite such obstacles, the Congress of the people proceeded with resiliency and courage. focused on its duty.

The Congress of the people outlined aspirational principles of Freedom and democracy in South Africa and declared for South Af-

rica and the entire world to know that *"South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people"*

This was to send a strong message to the apartheid government and the people of the world that South Africa will one day be free from the chains of racial oppression and gender discrimination. Our people believed that government must be chosen by the people in their totality, not by a tiny racial group but by cross sections of our people.

The Congress of the people further declared that *"The people shall govern"* and they further elaborated this principle in a more simplified manner when they said *"Civic participation by all people regardless of Race, Colour and Sex"*

This principle stood in opposition to the apartheid government, and



it rallied not only the oppressed people of our country, but it further mobilized international solidarity against viciousness of the apartheid regime whose policies were based on separate development, torture, discrimination, oppression, exploitation, abuse of authority and killing of our innocent people.

The Congress of the people clearly understood the role of racial exclusion hence they called for a non-racial South Africa, a South

Africa where all races have equal rights and opportunities regardless of the colour of your skin.

They went further calling for men and women of all races to have equal rights which remain a significant milestone in a patriarchal society like ours, where women, especially black women, were marginalized in their own motherland. The Charter continues to inspire our nation as it laid the foundation for a more democratic South Africa where women par-

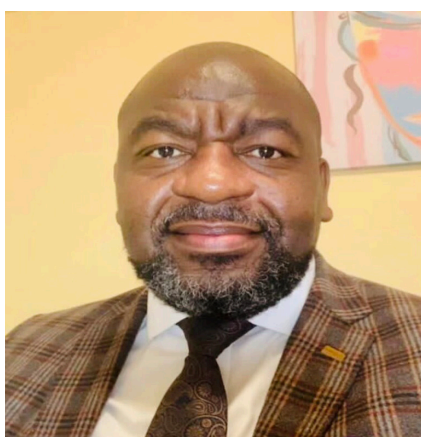
ticipate equally in the affairs of their country as we build new a South Africa for all.

The Freedom Charter laid the moral and political ground for the post-apartheid constitution that remains central to South Africa's identity, because it continues to promote democracy, economic inclusion, justice and human rights for all. It strives to build a society based on equality and dignity for all regardless of race, gender and colour.

PERSPECTIVES FROM YOUTH ON SHAPING CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY, AS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE YOUTH AND THE CONSTITUTION DIALOGUE

South Africa's constitutional democracy is not a finished project. It is a living, evolving framework that must be constantly shaped by the people it serves. Nowhere is this more evident than in the voices of young South Africans who, at the recent Youth and the Constitution Dialogue held on 15 April 2025, at the Brigitte Mabandla Justice College in Pretoria, demonstrated both a deep appreciation for the democratic gains of the past and a clear sense of urgency for continued transformation.

Held under the theme "Freedom in Our Hands: Youth Shaping Constitutional Democracy," the dialogue formed part of Youth Month commemorations and coincided with the 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter. It aimed to educate, inspire, and mobilise young people to actively participate in policymaking, social cohesion, and the electoral processes. A clarion call was made by the Deputy Minister of Justice and Consti-



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"We are not the leaders of tomorrow. We are the partners of today. Our ideas, our voices, and our leadership are not optional add-ons they are essential ingredients to making our democracy work."

tutional Development, Honorable Andries Nel who, in his address, reminded participants that "our democracy does not thrive in silence or apathy. It demands the active participation of its citizens especially its youth."

In response to this call, young people rose to the occasion with passion and purpose. One delegate powerfully asserted that the Constitution is more than a trophy to be admired behind glass cabinets it must be used as a tool to fight poverty, inequality, unemployment, and exclusion.

This sentiment echoed throughout the dialogue, with young people consistently highlighting areas where constitutional promises remain unfulfilled. Issues such as access to delivering quality services, jobs, land, and economic inclusion were raised as areas where implementation has lagged behind the ideals enshrined in the Constitution. While acknowledging South Africa's Constitution as one of the most progressive in the world, many participants



how the Bill of Rights must be enforced and protected in the digital space, just as it is in real life. With the rapid expansion of digital platforms, they noted that questions around data privacy, misinformation, cyberbullying, and digital exclusion require urgent attention. Considering recent debates on Artificial Intelligence regulation, online safety, and the role of social media in shaping political narratives, one participant captured the moment succinctly: “Our democracy is increasingly digital. Our constitutional protections must be too.”

The dialogue concluded with a clear message to political leadership, make space for the youth not symbolically, but structurally. One delegate summarised the call to action: “We are not the leaders of tomorrow. We are the partners of today. Our ideas, our voices, and our leadership are not optional add-ons they are essential ingredients to making our democracy work.”

The response expected from government is simple; to be fully committed to realising the transformative promise of the Constitution. The youth have spoken not with contempt, but with clarity and conviction. Their message is clear: protect democracy, expand opportunity, and let the values of the Constitution live in the everyday lives of the youth and all South Africans.

In the enduring words of the Freedom Charter: “The people shall govern.” Today, South Africa’s youth are reminding us that this includes them •

lamented that, 30 years into democracy, the lived experience of young people particularly those in rural areas, townships, and informal settlements still reflects deep-rooted systemic barriers to their upliftment.

Speakers underscored that progress has been made, but that the full promise of the Constitution will remain out of reach unless these structural inequalities are addressed with urgency and commitment.

Importantly, the voices of youth did not only offer critique they offered partnership. Delegates expressed a strong desire to work with government in finding solutions, calling for greater transparency and accountability, particularly at the local government level where service delivery failures have a direct impact on communities. The role of Chapter 9 institutions, including the South African

Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Public Protector, was also highlighted as critical in safeguarding the rights of young people and strengthening democracy.

A notable takeaway from the dialogue was the strong support among youth for the proposed upcoming National Dialogue. One delegate captured this by saying, “Democracy must go beyond elections. We want to co-design policy, not just be consulted as a tick-box,” reflecting a strong demand for meaningful and continuous youth participation in democratic processes. While young people acknowledge the hard-won right to vote as sacrosanct, there was also a powerful call for new participatory models such as citizen assemblies, youth advisory councils in municipalities, and broader civic education programmes.

In panel discussions, youth delegates raised the critical issue of

SEVENTY YEARS OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER

The Freedom Charter was adopted in Kliptown on 26 June 1955, seventy years ago. Thousands of delegates had travelled from across South Africa—by train, by bus, on foot—to take part in the Congress of the People. They met under an open sky, gathered on the dusty field where a wooden stage had been erected. Armed police ringed the perimeter, their presence a reminder of the risks. But inside the fence, the atmosphere was determined and jubilant. One by one, the clauses of the Charter—on land, work, education, housing, democracy, peace—were read aloud, and each was met with unanimous approval.

The Charter was the distilled expression of months of discussion and collective vision. Seventy years later, it remains one of the most transformative statements in our history.

Discussions of the Freedom Charter seldom place it in its full historical context. Yet to understand its true significance, we must see it as part of a wider global moment—an era in which oppressed peoples across the world were rising against colonialism.



CDE RONNIE KASRILS

Published in the Mail & Guardian, 5 June 2025

After the defeat of fascism in 1945 there was a deep sense of possibility. The victory over fascism fuelled a new international moral order, embodied in the founding of the United Nations and its Charter, with its emphasis on human rights, self-determination, and peace. In the colonised world, this was accompanied by a wave of anti-colonial struggle, with growing demands for independence and equality. India gained independence in 1947. Ghana followed a decade later, in 1957.

In April 1955, two months before the Freedom Charter was adopted, 29 newly independent and colonised nations met in Bandung, Indonesia. The Bandung Conference gave voice to the aspirations

of the global South—to end colonialism and racial domination, to assert autonomy in world affairs, and to build cooperation among formerly colonised peoples. Bandung was a declaration of global non-alignment and post-colonial confidence. It thrilled anti-colonial forces around the world.

The Freedom Charter emerged amid this excitement. It, too, was a declaration by an oppressed majority that they would not accept colonial domination. It expressed the same spirit of decolonisation, the same insistence on democracy, equality, and national sovereignty. But it did not come from heads of state or official delegations—it came from the people themselves.

This period of hope was shadowed by a fierce imperial backlash. In Iran, Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh's nationalisation of oil in 1951 was met with a CIA- and MI6-backed coup in 1953, restoring the Shah and Western control over oil. In Guatemala, President Jacobo Árbenz's modest land reforms provoked a similar response. In 1954 the CIA orchestrated his removal to protect U.S. corporate interests.



Across the world, moments of popular sovereignty were crushed to preserve imperial power. The Korean War (1950–53) marked the aggressive militarisation of the Cold War and signalled that the global North would not easily cede control. A decade later, these counterrevolutions continued. In 1961, Congo's first elected leader, Patrice Lumumba, was assassinated with the support of the CIA. In 1966, Kwame Nkrumah, who had declared that "the independence of Ghana is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of Africa," was overthrown in a coup supported by Western powers.

In South Africa the vision set out in the Freedom Charter was swiftly met with state repression. Just months after its adoption, 156 leaders of the Congress Alliance were arrested and charged with treason in a trial that dragged on until 1961. Then came the Sharpeville Massacre in March 1960, when police opened fire on unarmed protesters, killing 69 people. Within days, the apartheid regime banned the ANC and the PAC, forcing the liberation movements underground. In response the ANC took the decision to turn to armed struggle.

Discussions of the Freedom Charter too often abstract it from the process that gave it life—a process that was profoundly democratic, consultative, and rooted in the daily lives of ordinary people. In 1953, the African National Congress, and its partners in the Congress Alliance issued a call for a national dialogue: to ask, plainly and urgently, "What kind of South Africa do we want to live in?"

The response was remarkable. Across the country, in townships, rural villages, workplaces, churches, and various kinds of gatherings, people came together to develop their demands. Submissions arrived handwritten on

scraps of paper, carefully composed on typewriters, or dictated to organisers. It was one of the most significant exercises in participatory democracy ever undertaken in South Africa.

The Charter was a statement of popular will, arrived at through a process that gave it profound legitimacy. It called not only for political rights, but for the redistribution of land, the sharing of the country's wealth, and equality across race, gender, and class. It marked a decisive break with apartheid thinking and set out a radical vision for justice.

The Freedom Charter expressed a vision of South Africa grounded in equality, justice, and shared prosperity. It called instead for a radically democratic and redistributive order. "The People Shall Govern" was the opening clause—affirmed not only the right to vote, but the deeper principle that power must reside with the people. The declaration that "The Land Shall Be Shared Among Those Who Work It," challenging the dispossession at the heart of colonial and apartheid rule. Crucially the charter called for an economy based on public benefit rather than private profit: "The national wealth of our country, the heritage of South Africans, shall be restored to the people."

Education, housing, and health care were to be universal and equal. The Charter demanded that "The Doors of Learning and of Culture Shall Be Opened," insisting on access to knowledge and creative expression for all. It envisioned a South Africa without racism or sexism, where all would be "equal before the law," with

It means rekindling the culture of popular meetings, community mandates, and worker-led initiatives that shaped political life in the 1980s and grounded the Freedom Charter in lived experience.

"peace and friendship" pursued abroad.

After the banning of the liberation movements in the 1960s and the brutal repression that followed, the Freedom Charter did not disappear—but it did recede from popular memory, its vision dimmed under the weight of censorship, exile, and political imprisonment. But in the 1980s, it surged back into public life with renewed force.

The formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983 in Cape Town, and the emergence of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) in 1985 in Durban, gave new organisational life to the Charter. These new and powerful social forces, drawing on community structures, civic associations, church groups, and trade unions, took the Charter out of the archives and into the streets. For both the UDF and the trade union movement the Charter promised a future grounded in radical democracy and the redis-

tribution of land and wealth.

As apartheid crumbled under the pressure of mass struggle, the Freedom Charter provided an essential reference point for the negotiations that began after the unbanning of the liberation movements in 1990. It had become a moral compass and a unifying framework for the liberation movement. Its language and principles profoundly shaped elements of the 1996 Constitution.

The Charter's insistence that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it" and that "the people shall govern" was carried through into the constitutional affirmation of non-racialism and universal suffrage. The guarantees of equality, dignity, and freedom of association all echo the Charter's vision. Its influence is also evident in the recognition of socio-economic rights—such as the rights to housing, education, and healthcare—which were once radical demands shouted at ral-

lies and are now enshrined in law.

But the transition also involved compromise. In the 1980s, the Charter had been taken up not just as a legal or symbolic document, but as a call for deep structural transformation, especially in the economy and land ownership. These demands were rooted in a mass politics of resistance—workplace occupations, street committees, and civic forums that embodied popular power.

At the settlement, however, key clauses—particularly those calling for the redistribution of land and the sharing of national wealth—were softened or deferred. The commitment to a unitary, non-racial state was defended. But economic clauses became points of contention. The final settlement preserved existing patterns of private property, including land ownership, and accepted a macroeconomic framework shaped in part by global neoliberal pressures. While the vote was won, the deeper transformations envisioned in the Charter were postponed.

The result is that today, thirty years after the end of apartheid, the structural inequalities remain. In 1998, Thabo Mbeki described South Africa as a country of “two nations”—one rich and white, the other poor and black. That characterisation remains disturbingly accurate.

While a black middle class and elite has now emerged, the vast majority of South Africans still live with the daily consequences of poverty, unemployment, and exclusion. The economic promises of the Freedom Charter—its commit-

ment to sharing the wealth of the country—have not been fulfilled.

The 2024 general election marked a historic turning point. Taken together, the two dominant parties garnered support from less than a quarter of the eligible population. Nearly 60% of eligible voters did not participate at all, while a growing number remain unregistered. This reflects not apathy, but deep disillusionment with formal politics. The Charter’s promise that “the people shall govern” demands more than a vote—it requires active, sustained participation.

This means rebuilding mass democratic participation from below. It means rekindling the culture of popular meetings, community mandates, and worker-led initiatives that shaped political life in the 1980s and grounded the Freedom Charter in lived experience. It means going beyond elections and restoring a sense of everyday democratic agency—in schools, workplaces, neighbourhoods, and unions. It means making good on the promise to redistribute land and wealth.

It also means rebuilding solidarity across the Global South. The formation of the Hague Group in January this year to build an alliance in support of Palestine was a major breakthrough, and the meeting it will hold in Bogota in July promises to expand its reach and power.

But we must recognise the scale of resistance to such transformation. Powerful forces—both local and global—are deeply invested in the status quo. Economic elites and a set of NGOs, think tanks and

media projects funded by Western donors work to frame redistributive politics as illegitimate, reckless, or authoritarian. These networks have grown increasingly bold as support for the ANC has declined.

In June 2023, the Brenthurst Foundation—funded by the Openheimer family—convened a conference in Gdańsk in Poland. Branded as a summit to “promote democracy,” the conference issued a “Gdańsk Declaration” that was an attempt to legitimise Western-backed opposition to progressive forces in Africa and Global South. Present were the leaders of Democratic Alliance John Steenhuisen, IFP leader Velenkosini Hlabisa, former Daily Maverick editor Branko Brkic, and representatives of RENAMO (Mozambique), UNITA and UNITA-Renovada (Angola)—all organisations with historical ties to Western-backed counter-revolutionary forces.

The event marked the open emergence of a transnational alliance aimed at neutralising any attempt to challenge elite power in the name of justice or equality. It is a reminder that the struggle to realise the Charter’s vision will not be won on moral terms alone—it will require effective political organisation, ideological clarity, and courage. The Freedom Charter was born of struggle. It must now be defended and renewed through struggle •

BOOK REVIEW

Cde Saul Pelle

Nelson Mandela by Himself

The Authorised Book of Quotations

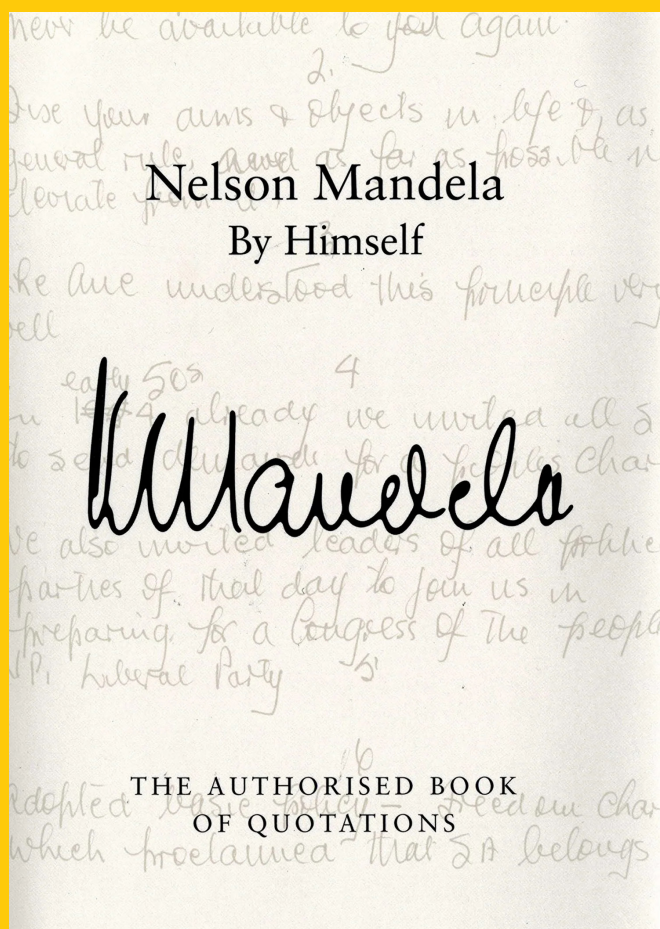


Who, from amongst us people of the world, young and old, have not heard or read books or pamphlets or articles, speeches or even quotations by and or about Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela?

Probably very few. Well, Nelson Mandela by Himself is the first wholly accurate and authorised record of Nelson Mandela's most inspiring and historically important quotations.

Nelson Mandela is one of the most quoted people in the world. This is ironic, given that for much of his adult life he could not be quoted at all. In South Africa, quoting Mandela carried with it the threat of a criminal record and a possible prison sentence. Under the apartheid regime, people who were banned or imprisoned could not be quoted, and Mandela was successively banned from December 1952 and was in custody from 5 August 1962 until 11 February 1990.

During the 90th celebration of Walter Sisulu in May 2002, Mandela made a powerful speech wherein he said, **"what counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the lives we lead"** This quotation is in fact the first quotation cited in the book in bold relief."



The quotations, according to editors of this solid book, are organised into over 300 categories, gathered from privileged authorised access to Mandela's vast personal archive of private papers, speeches, correspondence and audio recordings – features more than 2,000 quotations spanning 60 years, many previously unpublished. These quotations have been divided into 317 categories within which they appear in chronological order, providing an interesting insight into how his ideas evolved and in many cases remained the same.

Quotations have been selected from Mandela's speeches as far back as 1951, recorded interviews from before he was sent to prison, letters dating back to 1948, diary extracts including from his 1962 trip to the north of our continent and the UK, as well as impromptu remarks, among others.

Who cannot be moved by the awe inspiring quote from the famous speech that Madiba gave from the balcony of the Cape Town Hall on Sunday 11 February 1990, where the newly released Mandela addressed a crowd of thousands of supporters, who had gathered on the grand Parade to hear his voice, and an audience of millions through television and radio:

"Friends, comrades and fellow South Africans, I greet you all in the name of peace, democracy and freedom for all. I stand before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you, the people. Your tireless and heroic sacrifices have made it possible for me to be here today. I therefore place the remaining years of my life in your hands." And he certainly followed through to this promise.

Some of Mandela's powerful quotes in this book are his address to the youth of South Africa: "To the youth of South Africa we have special message: We have lost a great hero. You have repeatedly shown that your love of freedom is greater than that most precious gift, life itself. But you are the leaders of tomorrow. Your country, people, your organisation need you to act with wisdom. A particular responsibility rest on your shoulders." **From the televised address to the nation after the assassination of Chris Hani, South Africa, 13 April 1993.**

And,
 "There can be no process more important for the future of youth Africa than the realisation of the

potential of our youth. Freedom would be hollow if it did not bring about the liberation from the heavy weight that restrained their energy, dampen their enthusiasm for life and cast an angry shadow on their self esteem."

From the Annual gold award ceremony of the President's Award, South Africa, 25 November 1994.

Nelson Mandela by Himself is the first, and only authorised and authenticated collection of quotations by one of the world's most admired individuals. This must have book is edited by Sello Hatang and Sahn Venter, and is published by Pan Macmillan South Africa in 2013.