



ANC PARLIAMENTARY Caucus

Newsletter.

FEB



Reflections of

**JANUARY 8
STATEMENT**

**20
26**





TURNING THE TIDE AGAINST CORRUPTION



The significance of the parliamentary process not only in the Mkhwanazi allegations and policing, but all other matters of corruption in the public service, is that it allows Parliamentarians to be vigilant and know how sophisticated syndication of crime in government works.

This sophistication allows for exorbitant amounts to be stolen by thugs, who in turn dish out patronage to continue with their weird ways, whilst their extravagance is maintained by government.

In fact, it gets so crazy that people are put on pay roll of



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government to do crime and at worse to carry out killings of other employees and whistleblowers. Inefficiencies in government, maybe, but planned operations within government, absolutely. This is

corruption at its worse and this is how Babita Deokaran died.

This is where the oversight role of parliament comes in and becomes significant. The ABC's of parliamentary oversight involves asking questions about the government funds, and the government performance in implementing projects.

Government employs professionals and competent South Africans to do this kind of work. When they fail to do so, in situations where business plans had been presented to motivate to get the money, then Parliament is justified to ask questions.

Corruption has permeated South African society's fabric that it would be very difficult to reverse, but it should never be an acceptable way of life that is even tolerated.

That top ranking state officials take bribes neither legitimises nor justifies the illegality and that is what should be confronted with rage and fury. During the January 8 address, the President, Honourable Cyril Ramaphosa, told a packed Moruleng Stadium, Moruleng, North West, that rooting out corruption remained an "overriding priority".

Many wondered about the statements of the President, when each time he addresses the nation, an emphasis is placed on corruption, and the effort government is putting to rid society of this witchcraft.

The English dictionary defines corruption as "dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power, typically involving bribery". At the heart of this problem is the intention to receive an undue benefit, without breaking sweat, and without justification or cause.

Mostly and often, it is triggered by someone desperate for help or service, with such end result as selfishly exchanging money and pleasantries. The act of corruption simply requires an initiator and a crooked intention with the promise of remuneration. When executed well, the destruction is usually manifest across society.



It therefore calls on Parliament to get involved, and model laws on how and where corruption manifests, and the advanced methods used to execute it like the payroll incident.

Many had wondered why the Ad hoc Committee to Investigate Allegations made by Lieutenant General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi would go visit an incarcerated accused person and sit in a prison. It was in the quest for truth, and in the quest to end corruption in our country.

Wherever such an assignment requires parliamentarians to go, Parliament must go there.

If making devil accountable means going to hell, so must

we go as parliamentarians on behalf of our people.

Yes, the CAT methods are clumsy, violent and amateurish. But the knowledge gained in how one closes loopholes justifies the Parliamentary processes as an accountability mechanism on government working.

The African National Congress, the government and the Parliament it leads, will not sit idle when the practice of corruption is boiling towards crisis point, in the proportion it has in our country.

"Through institutions such as the Special Investigating Unit and the Asset Forfeiture Unit,

billions of rands in stolen funds have been recovered and charges have been brought against alleged wrongdoers,” the President had said in Moroleng.

He said reporting on the Zondo Commission recommendations was happening over and above strengthened institutional legal reforms to prevent and combat corruption. This is a promise.

Millions followed the address through the traditional media platforms, and many more other millions followed the proceedings on social media platforms. Among these were enablers mostly employed by the state. These are people whose actions and inactions exacerbates the practice of corruption to easily permeate society.

However, it is not limited to the public service. There are companies and private sector role players who are making things worse, far worse. And there are many.

These people use legitimate business practices on paper and go around delving in their get-rich-quick schemes in reality. It is these kinds of actions that impoverish the poor black South Africans. And it is these people who frustrate the work of government.

Monies that are meant to go to public use and benefit, are recycled for the rich and the thugs to live lavishly like kings and queens.

It becomes sad when thugs hoodwink and entangle the law enforcements. With such eventuality as to result in deaths of innocent lives and state employees with genuine intentions.

Corruption should not only be punishable by law but the codes of conduct in political formations. Corruption not only eats into our being but our soul.

Sites of corruption are known and so too are the perpetrators. Ports of entry, border gates, traffic departments, municipalities, provincial governments, sector education and training authorities, and to some extent provincial and national government departments and entities.

Often and recently, these were coupled with the weakening of accountability mechanisms and the law enforcements and the total disregard of legislative provisions.

Under the scorching heat of Moruleng sun, the President committed to continue with a focussed implementation of the recommendations of the Commission on State Capture and to respond “promptly and decisively” to the findings of the Madlanga Commission currently on the go. This commission is complementing the work the Ad hoc committee is doing. It serves us well to know that what we are doing will not be in vein.

“We will restore public trust and uphold constitutional values; and strengthen the integrity and capacity of the criminal justice system, national security, border management, anti-corruption measures and community safety,” President Ramaphosa had said.

We demand implementation and results, and we demand accountability. If we fail to do this as comrades, then we have failed the noble test of the National Democratic Revolution. A test for which so many had laid down their lives.

To that end, we all ought to ask as to what cause do we derive legitimacy to call ourselves leaders if we fail.

How could we be so selfish as to sabotage a society on whose behalf we have waged 114 years of liberation struggle?

We owe it to the generations of struggle stalwarts, living and departed, that we do not become another failed, corruption-infested post-colonial nation. Our country and practices should never be about who you know to access opportunities and government funding.

Billions of rands are being paid back to the state from private companies abroad, and many of whom operated on “consultancy basis”. This work should be enhanced.



FROM CONNECTIVITY TO COMPETITIVENESS:

ADVANCING DIGITAL INCLUSION AS A CORE 2026 PRIORITY

The African National Congress has declared 2026 as the Year of Decisive Action to Fix Local Government and Transform the Economy. This call, articulated in our January 8th Statement, is both politically conscious and historically necessary. It affirms that strengthening the ANC across all leadership spheres must go hand in hand with transforming the material conditions of our people. Central to this task is advancing digital sovereignty, transformation and inclusion, and deepening our investment in science, innovation, and research as drivers of inclusive economic growth.

Today, digital connectivity and internet access are no longer luxuries. They are necessities. Digital inclusion has become inseparable from economic empowerment and social participation. Strategies to confront the triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment increasingly rely on digital tools, platforms, and data-driven interventions.



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From access to education and healthcare, to participation in the labour market and small business development, the digital sector underpins modern development.

Yet, the digital divide in South Africa remains stark. This divide is not merely technological; it is a contemporary manifestation of historical inequality. It mirrors the spatial, economic, and social exclusions engineered by apartheid planning and perpetuated through uneven development. Communities that were deliberately underdeveloped remain disconnected, while access to

digital infrastructure, affordable data, and skills continues to follow old fault lines.

The consequences of digital exclusion are profound. Children in under-connected communities are locked out of online learning opportunities. Jobseekers are unable to access digital labour platforms. Small and informal businesses struggle to reach broader markets. In this context, digital inclusion must be understood as a prerequisite for the full realisation of the rights enshrined in our Constitution, including the rights to equality, education, dignity, and access to information.

Our movement's commitment to industrialisation and economic transformation demands that connectivity be treated as a foundation for competitiveness.

As the ANC has consistently proclaimed, industrial policy must position South Africa's diverse industries to succeed in an increasingly digitised and technologically advanced global economy. In a shifting geopolitical landscape, competitiveness will



be determined by our ability to harness digital technologies, develop local capabilities, and build resilient value chains.

This requires deliberate state intervention to ensure that South Africans, particularly historically marginalised groups, are equipped with digital skills and have access to locally relevant content and platforms. Digital inclusion is not simply about access to devices or networks; it is about meaningful participation in the digital economy as producers, innovators, and entrepreneurs.

The January 8th Statement further calls on municipalities to play a leading role in driving digital inclusion and growing the digital economy. The digitisation of local government services is essential to improving efficiency, enhancing transparency, and restoring public trust in the state.

ANC-led municipalities must lead this transformation, ensuring

that technology is deployed as a tool for better governance and improved service delivery. In doing so, we advance the vision of a capable, ethical, and developmental state that is responsive to the needs of its people.

However, digital transformation cannot occur in isolation. It must be underpinned by sustained investment in science, innovation, and research. The Fourth Industrial Revolution presents both opportunities and challenges for South Africa. While it is infrastructure- and capital-intensive, it also offers pathways to leapfrog development, create new industries, and address longstanding socio-economic challenges.

The shift we are driving as the ANC is clear: we must move from being passive consumers in the ICT space to active contributors and innovators. This means strengthening our research institutions, supporting

innovation ecosystems, investing in local technology development, and aligning skills development with future-oriented industries.

As we mark 30 years of our democratic Constitution and 70 years of the Freedom Charter, we are reminded that political freedom must be accompanied by economic and social emancipation. In this moment, ensuring that the digital economy works for all South Africans is not optional—it is imperative. Advancing digital transformation and inclusion must therefore be a core priority for any state committed to a national development agenda.

The ANC remains resolute in its commitment to build a digitally inclusive, innovative, and competitive South Africa—one in which technology is harnessed in the service of the people, and where no one is left behind in the march towards shared prosperity.



THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN

REALISING THE FREEDOM CHARTER THROUGH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

At the heart of the South African liberation struggle against apartheid colonialism lies the Freedom Charter, a visionary document adopted in 1955 that enshrines the aspirations and dreams of a nation yearning for justice, equality, and freedom. Among its powerful clauses is the declaration that "The People Shall Govern," a call for genuine democracy and public power. Central to translating this vision into reality is local government, a critical sphere wherein the expression of the people's will become tangible and transformative.

Local government in South Africa serves as the most immediate tier of governance, closest to the everyday realities of its citizens. It is here, at the municipal level, that the ideals of the Freedom Charter intersect with the lives of ordinary people. The charter's call for governance by the people is reflected in the democratic structures that have been instituted to ensure local authorities are responsive, transparent, and accountable to the communities they serve. This



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governance model is not merely bureaucratic; it is profoundly participatory, inviting citizens to engage in decision-making processes that directly affect their environments and quality of life.

The principle that "The People Shall Govern" is actualized through mechanisms that empower communities to have a direct hand in shaping their futures. Local governments are tasked with facilitating platforms for public participation, enabling citizens to voice concerns, propose initiatives, and collaborate on policies. Ward committees, integrated development plans (IDPs), and

public consultation meetings are examples of the participatory avenues designed to encourage active civic engagement. Through these structures, communities can identify priorities, allocate municipal resources, and monitor service delivery. This participatory governance ensures that local development reflects the diverse needs and desires of the population, promoting a sense of ownership and accountability within the democratic process.

When communities participate actively, they can hold their leaders accountable, ensuring that government actions align with public interests and the revolutionary tenets of the Freedom Charter. In our democracy communities are enabled if not able to achieve the desired results of social delivery at local government level are able to petition Portfolio Committees in National Government. Ours is a people centred democracy which means that no doors to the corridors of power are closed to communities. On the contrary they are open as espoused by the Freedom Charter.

While the framework for local governance in South Africa is established, realizing the Freedom Charter's vision local government faces several challenges. Issues such as corruption, inefficiency, and inequality can hinder efforts to create a truly democratic and equitable local governance system. The hollowing out of skills at local government level and outsourcing functions equally creates service delivery challenges. These are currently being addressed by the ANC.

However, these challenges also present opportunities for reinvigorating civic involvement. Strengthening anti-corruption measures, enhancing transparency, and fostering a culture of accountability to ensure social delivery to communities.

These are crucial steps in building trust between local governments and the communities they serve. Moreover, education and capacity-building initiatives can empower citizens with the knowledge and skills needed to participate effectively in governance. Civil society organizations play an essential role in bridge-building, advocating for policy changes, and monitoring local government performance. By harnessing the collective power of informed and engaged citizens, South Africa can progressively dismantle the barriers to true democratic governance as envisaged by the Freedom Charter.

Local Government is critical for micro economic development in



terms of local industrialisation, the development of township economies through the development of SMME's as well as the development of the township economy. The District Development model is at the core of ensuring economic empowerment and job creation. This approach by the ANC Government seeks to empower people to ensure inclusive economic development, job creation and economic empowerment as well as transformation. The DDM model seeks to link local communities to markets and social services. It through the DDM model that the ANC seeks to create a better life for all.

The country must and will overcome its constraints at local government level to ensure that service delivery occurs, whilst also ensuring that social delivery in the form of health, education and public facilities are developed at local government level. At the same time it is imperative that logistics constraints, water shortages, electricity supply are resolved to ensure that meaningful economic development occurs.

As South Africa continues to evolve, the vision of governance articulated in the Freedom Charter remains a guiding light. Local government is not just an administrative necessity but a vital organism of democracy that breathes life into the promise that "The People Shall Govern." By strengthening of democratic institutions, fostering inclusive participation, and prioritizing the genuine needs of communities, local government can become the ultimate expression of the South African people's will. In embodying the spirit of the Freedom Charter, South African local governance must persistently strive towards a model that champions equity, listens to its citizens, and implements change driven by the collective voice. This ongoing journey, while fraught with challenges, is a testament to the enduring resolve and resilience of its people to shape a future aligned with their dreams and the foundational promise of freedom and transformation.



FIXING LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS FIXING SOUTH AFRICA

From 24–26 January, the African National Congress (ANC) convened its National Executive Committee (NEC) Lekgotla under the theme “Year of Decisive Action to Fix Local Government and Transform the Economy.” This theme reflects a clear understanding of the lived realities of South Africans. When local government fails, people experience the consequences immediately — in their homes, streets, workplaces, and communities.

Local government is the sphere of the state closest to the people. It is where constitutional promises must translate into daily realities: water flowing from taps, reliable electricity supply, refuse removal, safe and maintained roads, functioning public facilities, and supportive conditions for local economic development. When municipalities work, communities live with dignity, businesses can operate, and families can plan for the future. When they fail, inequality deepens, frustration grows, and trust in democratic institutions is eroded.

The ANC acknowledges that many municipalities across the country have not functioned as they should. Persistent challenges — including



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financial mismanagement, weak governance systems, poor infrastructure maintenance, political instability, and corruption — have undermined service delivery and weakened the relationship between communities and the state. These realities cannot be denied. Renewal begins with honesty, accountability, and a willingness to confront failure directly.



It is for this reason that the NEC Lekgotla resolved that the movement must move from diagnosis to decisive action.

Restoring Stability, Accountability, and Ethical Leadership

A central focus of the ANC's intervention is the stabilisation of political and administrative leadership in municipalities. Chronic instability in councils, factional infighting, and the erosion of the distinction between political oversight and administrative execution have paralysed service delivery in many areas.

The ANC is strengthening oversight and enforcing accountability at all levels of local government. Councillors and officials who fail to perform their duties, violate ethical standards,

or place personal interests above community needs are being removed. This is not about punishment for its own sake, but about restoring a culture of responsibility and service. Capable, ethical, and committed leadership is being prioritised to ensure that municipal councils can focus on governance and delivery, rather than internal conflict.

Already, tangible progress is being made. In the Free State, non-performing councillors were recalled following structured oversight interventions. In the North-West, political stability has been reinforced through the filling of key leadership and administrative posts, allowing councils to function more effectively. These actions demonstrate that renewal is not a slogan, but a practical process.

Enforcing Financial Discipline and Protecting Public Resources

Financial mismanagement has been one of the most damaging weaknesses in local government. Uncontrolled expenditure, weak revenue collection, and failure to meet financial obligations — particularly to Eskom and water boards — have compromised municipalities' ability to deliver services.

The ANC is enforcing strict financial discipline. Municipalities that misuse public funds or fail to comply with financial regulations face firm consequences, including the conditional withholding of certain grants. This approach is designed to protect public resources and ensure that funds are directed towards service delivery and infrastructure maintenance, rather than waste or corruption.

At the same time, national and provincial departments are being called upon to settle outstanding debts owed to municipalities. Local government cannot function effectively if it is starved of resources due to failures elsewhere in the state. Fiscal responsibility must be enforced across all spheres of government.

Rebuilding and Protecting Infrastructure for Sustainable Service Delivery

Infrastructure is the backbone of local government. Years of underinvestment, neglect, and criminal activity have left many water systems, electricity networks, roads, and public

facilities in a state of decline. Fixing local government therefore requires a focused and sustained effort to rebuild and maintain infrastructure.

The ANC is committed to a comprehensive programme of infrastructure maintenance and renewal. Funds will be ring-fenced specifically for maintenance to prevent the recurrence of infrastructure collapse. Corruption in procurement processes will be confronted decisively, and criminal syndicates involved in infrastructure theft, vandalism, and sabotage will be dealt with through coordinated law enforcement action.

Communities deserve reliable, safe, and well-maintained services. Infrastructure investment is not only about repairing assets, but about restoring confidence in the capacity of the state to deliver.

Local Government as a Catalyst for Economic Growth and Job Creation

Fixing local government is inseparable from fixing the economy. Functional municipalities create an enabling environment for economic activity, investment, and job creation. When services are reliable and governance is predictable, small businesses can grow, township economies can thrive, and local contractors can participate meaningfully in development projects.

Infrastructure investment creates

employment opportunities, supports local suppliers, and injects economic activity directly into communities. The ANC is committed to using municipal procurement, infrastructure projects, and local economic development initiatives to empower small businesses, cooperatives, women, and young people. Economic growth must be inclusive and must begin where people live.

Rebuilding Trust Between Communities and the State

Years of service delivery failures have strained the relationship between communities and local government. Rebuilding trust requires transparency, responsiveness, and genuine community participation. The ANC is strengthening ward committees, improving communication with residents, and ensuring that communities play a meaningful role in planning and monitoring service delivery through Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and municipal budgets.

The renewal of local government is also about restoring dignity. People must see and feel that government listens, responds, and acts in their interests.

A Renewed Commitment to the People of South Africa

As South Africa marks thirty years of democracy, the ANC approaches the people with humility and honesty. We have heard the frustrations, the anger, and the demands for change. We recognise where mistakes

have been made, and we are committed to correcting them through decisive action.

A capable, ethical, and accountable local state is essential to improving daily life, growing the economy, and strengthening democracy. Fixing local government is not an abstract policy goal — it is a commitment to better living conditions, meaningful work, and restored hope in communities across the country.

However, the ANC also acknowledges that there are municipalities that are committed to delivering services and ANC councillors who serve their communities with dedication such as Councillor Tlangi Mogale in Gauteng, Councillor Tlake Reuben in Free State and many more. In these areas, councillors maintain regular engagement through monthly constituency meetings, State of the Ward addresses, and other community platforms, strengthening accountability and trust.

As the ANC COGTA Parliament Study Group, we reaffirm the resolutions of the NEC Lekgotla led by President Cyril Ramaphosa: the renewal of the ANC goes hand in hand with the renewal of the state and society.

Re re ho sechaba sa Afrika Borwa — re le utloile, re lokisa se robehileng, 'me re nka bohato bo tileng ba ho lokisa mebuso ea lehae le ho tlisa bophelo bo betere ho bohole.

STRENGTHENING BASIC EDUCATION AS A FOUNDATION FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

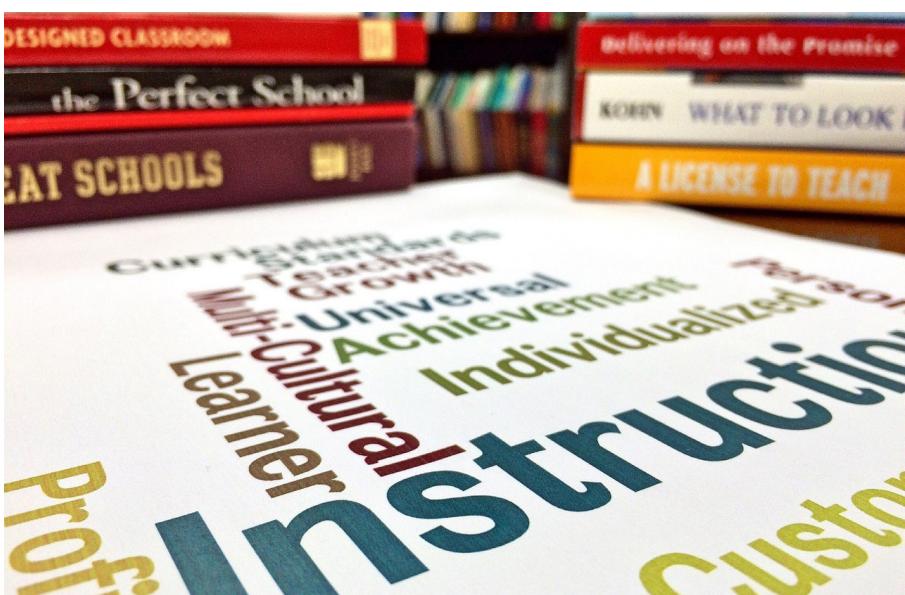
Introduction

As South Africa enters 2026, the African National Congress (ANC) reaffirms its historic commitment to education as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of social and economic transformation. Basic education remains central to the realisation of equality, dignity, and inclusive development. Strengthening the basic education system is therefore not only a policy priority but a moral and constitutional obligation that speaks directly to the future of our democracy.

The ANC Parliamentary Caucus recognises that while progress has been made in expanding access to schooling since 1994, deep structural challenges continue to undermine educational quality and equity. Addressing these challenges is essential if South Africa is to equip young people with the skills and capabilities required to participate meaningfully in society and the economy.

The State of Basic Education in South Africa

Recent outcomes in the basic education sector reflect both achievement and persistent



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inequality. The national matric pass rate of 88% in 2025 signals improvement in overall performance; however, this national average conceals stark provincial, racial, and spatial disparities. In

many rural and historically disadvantaged communities, pass rates remain significantly lower, highlighting enduring inequalities rooted in apartheid-era underdevelopment.

International assessments further underline the urgency of reform. South Africa continues to perform poorly in global comparisons of education quality, reflecting systemic weaknesses in foundational literacy, numeracy, and curriculum delivery. These outcomes threaten the country's long-term competitiveness and its ability to reduce unemployment, poverty, and inequality.

Key Challenges in the Basic Education System

One of the most pressing challenges facing basic education is inadequate school infrastructure. A significant proportion of schools still lack safe classrooms, a reliable water supply, and dignified sanitation facilities, conditions that undermine both teaching and learning. Such deficiencies disproportionately affect learners in rural areas and informal settlements, reinforcing cycles of disadvantage.

Equally concerning is the shortage of qualified teachers, particularly in critical subjects such as mathematics and science. Thousands of teaching posts remain vacant, placing a strain on existing educators and compromising learning outcomes. Research consistently shows that teacher quality is one of the strongest determinants of learner achievement (Spaull, 2013).

High dropout rates further weaken the system. Many learners exit school before completing basic education due to poverty, household instability, and limited support structures. This represents a profound loss of human potential and undermines national development objectives.

Strengthening Basic Education: A Transformative Agenda

The ANC Parliamentary Caucus supports a comprehensive approach to strengthening basic education.

First, sustained investment in school infrastructure is essential to ensure safe, inclusive, and well-resourced learning environments. Schools must be equipped not only with classrooms, but also libraries, laboratories, and digital resources that support holistic development.

Second, strengthening teacher development must remain a national priority. This includes improving initial teacher training, expanding continuous professional development, and providing targeted incentives to attract skilled educators to underserved areas. Evidence suggests that professional support and mentoring have a significant impact on improving teaching quality and learner outcomes (Department of Basic Education, 2022).

Third, community and parental involvement must be deepened. Schools function best when supported by active communities that reinforce a culture of learning. Partnerships with civil society, business, and local government can further enhance resource mobilisation and learner support.

Finally, policy coherence and effective governance are critical. Education reforms must be supported by efficient administration, equitable funding allocation, and robust accountability mechanisms to ensure that resources reach the learners who need them most.

Conclusion

Strengthening basic education is central to the ANC's vision of a united, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous South Africa. Education empowers individuals, strengthens democracy, and drives inclusive economic growth. As Nelson Mandela reminded us, education is the most powerful weapon with which to change the world.

The ANC Parliamentary Caucus remains committed to wielding this weapon responsibly, ensuring that every child, regardless of background or geography, has the opportunity to realise their full potential.

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ANC COUNCILLORS IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

“...For most of us it was a realization of our dreams as young combatants...I was very very happy...I was the first to cross the Zambezi River in a canoe...”. This was Chris Hani speaking fondly about the escapades of the “Luthuli Detachment” in the joint ANC/ZAPU military campaign from July to September 1967.

Karl Marx writes a letter to his father Henrich in 1837 at the age of 19 ; in it he opines as follows: “...If we have chosen a position in life in which we can most of all work for mankind, no burdens can bow us down, because they are sacrifices for the benefit of all; then we shall experience no petty, limited, selfish joy, but our happiness will belong to millions, our deeds will live on quietly but perpetually at work...”

One is trying to appeal to the “revolutionary conscience” of ANC councillors as they are on the last lap of the five year journey that started in 2021. Of course 2021 was a year “with a difference” in many respects... Covid 19 and Joe Biden (yes the 46th president of the United States) whose failures brought back Trump through the window to “triangulate” the world.



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Call this attempt igwatyu (war song) to “catapult” our “army” to stardom...or should I say to martyrdom? The ANC is this year turning 114 years of resilience... of uniting the people...of joy and pain...of Wankie and Mkatashinga...of Morogoro and the Ganga of Eight...Kabwe and Polokwane and has as usually directed our local government to double its efforts in :

- Building close working relationships with community-



- based formations
- Implementing Revenue Collection Plans to improve collection rates...and fix billing systems
- Ensuring that local economic development plans reflect the comparative advantages of their areas
- Revitalising industrial parks and Special Economic Zones to attract investment
- Reducing red tapes for local SMMEs and informal businesses.

This instruction to our first line of defense (councillors) is no mean feat and warrants support from ANC leadership across the board. ANC councillors as activists in their own right should always like

Oliver Reginald Tambo exercise servant leadership. Will Kenton has written extensively about servant leadership and his thesis emphasizes that servant leaders demonstrate amongst others the following:

- Empathy
- Listening
- Stewardship
- Commitment to personal growth of others

Oliver Tambo giving a new year message to the ANC external mission on the 1st of January 1971 had this to say: "Today, it is even more important that we continue to hold in our hands the weapon of unity we have in the past wielded with such dramatic results in our external work. It is

the weapon with which we have built up a volume of international support of our struggle, and a mountain international pressure against the racists, such as cannot but give great satisfaction to our colleagues who languish in South African jails. With that weapon of unity we have stood firm in the face of sustained and powerful enemy attacks on our movement – attacks mounted from different points at different angles with different methods.

With that weapon in our hands, we have gone to war and it inspired the gallants of Umkhonto we Sizwe in the historic battles of Wankie and Spolilo. They fought and fell, they punished and routed the imperialists agents, under the banners of the ANC, in the name of a united and suffering people. With that weapon, we shall fight and fall, we shall conquer and be free..."

U AC Jordaan in his famous novel THE WRATH OF THE ANCESTORS (INGQUMBO YEMINYANYA) through his character Mphuthumi says to Zwelinzima (the crown prince to AmaMpondomise akaTsolo "Yaphel'imihlambi kaZanemvula zizandawana namaxhwili...

Kaz'uhlelapha nj'uthi yaluswa yintengu na! (my apologies I have no English translation) It is therefore instructive to make a call to ANC councillors across the length and breadth of our country to serve our people with humility and love. We dare not fail!!!

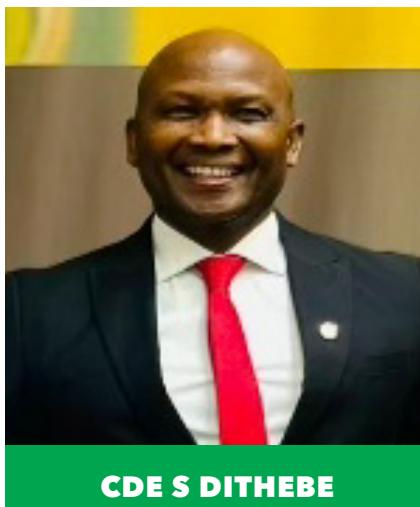


PLACING DIALOGUE AT THE CENTRE OF NATION-BUILDING TO OVERCOME DIVISION AND BUILD CONSENSUS

To speak of the nation in South Africa and how dialogue within the nation must be front and centre to weld the nation itself together, ensure that it coheres socially and ride the crest of the wave to prevail against the stubborn legacy of injustices of the past, is not a mere abstract immersion in theory or philosophy about a nation, but a revolutionary act to reverse the rationale of apartheid colonialism in the first place.

The Freedom Charter as Our Lodestar

This is a complex and difficult task that demands a vision and philosophy whose core components are what our forebears sought to undo in 1955, when they proclaimed 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 the people and further that our people have been robbed of their birthright



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to land, liberty and peace, by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality.'

They further asserted that, our 'country will never be prosperous or free, until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities.'

Such a prodigious invocation of the substance of the preamble of the Freedom Charter is both instructive and apposite more than ever because, more than seventy years after the adoption of this lodestar of the society we sought to create and the arraignment of the leaders of the

Congress movement on treason charges for daring the apartheid regime's segregationist and oppressive policies and laws through the vision of the will of the people, non-racialism and inclusivity, we must continue the march away from a fractured and unequal society that was emblematic of apartheid colonialism, to one that is hoisted on undergirded by "an effective and Developmental Path for Growth and Social Equity" and pursue such an ideal with every fibre of our being and every resource at our disposal.

2024 National and Provincial Elections: Implications and Ramifications

In the aftermath of the 2024 National and Provincial Elections, we have had to press the reset button and recalibrate our algorithm towards a National Dialogue to not only take a sober and hard look at the letter and spirit of our Constitution, but at the extent to which we have made progress or otherwise on the injunctions of the National Development Plan too.



The NDP Imperatives and the 2026 NEC Lekgotla National Dialogue Resolutions

To this end, the 26th to 27th January 2026 NEC Lekgotla among others concluded: "Our participation in the National Dialogue should be guided by four core principles: transparency, inclusivity, objectivity and action orientation."

Consistent with the urgings of the NDP (2030) to construct national unity that heals divisions of the past and pursues economic

empowerment, the 2026 January 8 Statement is not at variance with the NDP itself, in ensuring that we succeed in 'reducing poverty and slashing inequality; enhancing social cohesion, fostering active citizenry, promoting constitutional values, and establishing a capable state that provides quality services.' These ideals are not possible if the ANC-led revolutionary alliance, is consumed by insularity and fails to act with great urgency to effectively and decisively tackle massive youth unemployment, inequality and poverty, as well as confront any

and every incidence of Gender-based Violence and Femicide.

The ANC is thus required to marshal all its energies, experience and expertise in forging a pathway for a South Africa that all its citizens can call home to evolve and actualise. The ANC cannot and will not do this alone. It requires an ecosystem at whose heart is informed, active and empowered citizenry that is determined to be part of the social compact that will deliver on the values and principles of the Constitution. It will require non-state actors and active citizens who unequivocally embrace the philosophy of 'democratic values, fundamental human rights and social justice.'

Conclusion

Perhaps, no moment tests our nation-building and social cohesion project as much as when our country and economy are faced with harsh geopolitical challenges and those that conspire with external forces to undermine our very own survival as a nation.

Despite all this, the ANC stands to benefit both itself and the nation, in being an intrinsic part of a National Dialogue that does not merely seek to regurgitate cliched arguments and slogans on nation-building, social cohesion and consensus, but one that reframes our challenges to fix local government and transform the economy•



THE REDRESS DEBATE

WHY BROAD-BASED BLACK ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IS STILL NON-NEGOTIABLE IN 2026



entral to the ANC's theory of change - the National Democratic Revolution - is the ongoing struggle to transform our economy. While we urgently need faster, inclusive growth and job creation, we must never relent on the need to change the entrenched ownership patterns in South Africa. This is central to building a prosperous nation. Redress remains a non-negotiable for the ANC. When one reads the January 8th statement, it is replete with evidence that the redress imperative remains central to the ANC's DNA.

From the Freedom Charter to the Constitutional Principles developed by the ANC before negotiations commenced, to the Constitution itself, the principle of redress remains fundamental to the National Democratic Revolution.

And yet, there is a concerted onslaught from a number of



CDE C DUGMORE

quarters to undermine the struggle to transform our society. These dubious agendas are aimed at undermining our efforts to ensure that we build a genuinely prosperous nation where the wealth of the economy is shared.

One of the policies our government has used to begin to change the skewed ownership patterns of our economy is Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment. This policy is aligned directly to the constitutional imperative to

redress past imbalances and promote the empowerment of black South Africans, women and youth.

We have seen the discredited academic from Wits University, Professor William Gumede claim, without a shred of evidence, that fewer than 100 people in South Africa received over R1 trillion in deals. Despite repeated challenges to him to share the research, he has been unable to do so.

This is not surprising coming from this highly paid consultant to the moonshot pact consisting of FF Plus, DA, ACDP, Action SA and the IFP. Gumede's lies have been latched onto and spread by many media houses. Responding to the debate, BB-BEE Commissioner Tshediso Matona writes, "There is a concern about the way some are biasing and polarising the BEE debate, which poses the risk of losing the social justice imperative and purpose of the policy.

"There cannot be a diversion from the fundamental essence of B-BBEE as a policy born out of concern for justice and equality in the economy and society which were denied black people under apartheid. This would be a betrayal of the Constitution, which mandates the creation of a society based on equality, inclusion and social justice. It cannot be forgotten that black people entered democracy in 1994 burdened by the disadvantage of exclusion during the preceding decades of apartheid, and that the past still lives in the present. This is the problem that B-BBEE seeks to solve for, along with other transformation policies."

Matona then outlines real progress which has already been made: "Some go further with Employee Ownership Schemes, ensuring that workers directly share in the success of the companies they help to build. These initiatives embody the spirit of B-BBEE and show that transformation can be embraced in good faith.

For example, the B-BBEE Commission's National Status and Trends Report, based on B-BBEE certificates and reports of private and public entities, shows black ownership rose from 27% to 33.9% between 2017 and 2022. Since 2021, the spend on ESD is R170 billion, and R118 billion for spend on Skills Development, which are indicative of the potential impact if more entities implement B-BBEE elements.

Also, since 2017, B-BBEE transactions registered with the Commission amount to R700 billion, facilitating ownership transfer to black South Africans.

Even then, the B-BBEE Commission concedes that implementation of the policy is not entirely optimal and that red tape and 'gaming of the system' have crept into its processes, suggesting the legislation needs a review to simplify and improve compliance."

The 2026 January 8th Statement is very clear on our commitment to broad based black economic empowerment.

It states "The ANC has remained steadfast in defence of the constitutional imperative to redress past imbalances and promote the empowerment of black South Africans, women and youth. Accordingly, we will defend black economic empowerment, which has come under severe attack".

Our ANC government has massively expanded the social security net and built a genuine "social wage" which includes grants, no fee schools, state bursaries for the deserving, a minimum wage and a certain quantum of free basic water and electricity. This is an achievement of which we can be proud.

However, a number of economists have argued that we need to shift the focus from income to assets and

endowments. Michael Sacks, in an article titled "Inequality is the binding constraint – thinking again about growth and redistribution in South Africa argues; "Redistributing assets should be aimed at building the capabilities of households to access credit, land (both rural and urban) housing and other public social amenities that are close to economic activities but accessible to workers".

As we focus on the implementation of the ANC economic action plan (10-point plan) which aimed at accelerating inclusive growth and job creation, we need to ensure that we remain seized with the question of how we can provide greater access to assets and endowments for the majority of South Africans.

Let us put all our efforts into fixing local government and transforming our economy in 2026.

Let us defeat those reactionary forces who seek to undermine the fundamental need to confront the legacy of unfair discrimination.

Let it be known far and wide, that it is only the ANC that has the political will and capability to redress the imbalances of the past.



BOOK REVIEW

Cde Saul Pelle

Founding the South African Native National Congress.

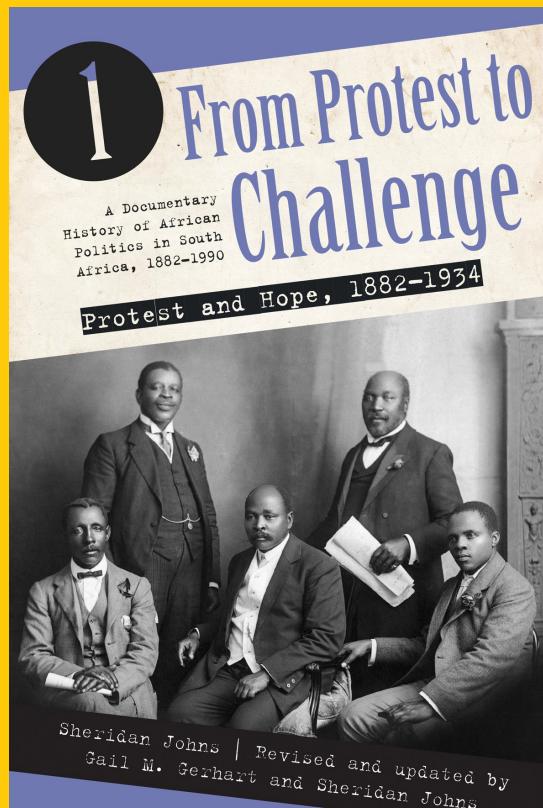
FROM PROTEST TO CHALLENGE

A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882 - 1934 (Volume 1)

Close on a hundred delegates from all parts of South Africa and the Protectorates attended the ANC's inaugural conference at Bloemfontein (today's Mangaung) on 8 January 1912. Amongst chiefs present were nine influential leaders, including Maama Seeiso, representing the Basutholand monarch Letsie II, and Joshua Molema, representing the Barolong paramount Lekoko Montsioa.

John Mocher, president of the Free State Native Congress, took the chair. Pixley ka Isaka Seme and Molema moved the institution of Congress. This thereupon adopted a constitution and elected an executive with John Langalibalele Dube as president, seven vice-presidents including Rev Dr Walter Rubusana, the corresponding secretary Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje, a recording secretary Attorney GD Montshioa of Pietersburg, and two treasurers, Seme and Thomas Mapikela (Orange Free State). Letsie II accepted the position of honorary president, but he was only one of some eight reigning monarchs who were elected to the position; others were the kings of the Lozi, Zulu, Pondo, Tembu, Barolong, Bakgatla and Bangwato." Class and Colour in South Africa By Jack and Ray Simons, p. 133 - 134.

Whereas a great number of books have dealt with the period leading to, during and after the founding of the South African Native National Congress, including the



one by Jack and Ray Simons as quoted above, volume 1 of *From Protest to Challenge* has devoted substantial time and space with the aim of giving necessary insights to this important period of the liberation politics in South Africa.

The documents reproduced in this Volume of 'From Protest to Challenge', are primary sources: words that were written, spoken, recited, sometimes even sung, by people who were historical actors, known and unknown, participating in the political struggles of the past.

While the authors' introductory chapters offer a narrative that imposes a simplified order and coherence on history, many of the documents reflect the more complex and contradictory realities of lived experience in a repressive apartheid society.

Many are of a public character – speeches, policy statements, leaflets, etc., but some are called "hidden transcripts", documents expressing private, off-the-record thoughts and opinions that often throw light on important political undercurrents not apparent in the public record.

Of particular interest in this Book Review is the founding of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), a vehicle by Africans to speak with one voice. An article by Pixley ka Isaka Seme which appeared in the newspaper *Imvo Zabantsundu* illustrates this notion: "The South African Native National Congress is the voice in the wilderness bidding all the dark races to come together once or twice

a year in order to review the past and reject therein all those things which have retarded our progress, the things which poison the springs of our national life and virtue; to label and distinguish the sins of civilisation, and as members of one household, to talk and think loudly on our home problems and the solution of them."

The authors of *A Brief History of South Africa*, John Pampallis and Maryke Bailey state that although the founding meeting of the South African Native National Congress (renamed the African National Congress in 1923) took place without much fanfare or publicity, it proved to be one of the seminal events in South African History; its significance was possibly not recognised even by those who founded the organisation. For over a century, they authors note, the Congress would be the leading voice of Africans in the country. Ninety-two years after its establishment, it would lead South Africa to democracy and form its first democratically elected government.

The book is divided in two parts: *Protest and Hope, 1882 to 1934*, covering Africans in the Pre-Union Political Order, 1882 – 1909; *Mobilization and Protest, 1910 – 1920*; *New Channels for African Representation, 1921 – 1934*, and *Africans Acting Alone*.

Part 2 is a compendium of rare Documents from 1882 – 1934. Altogether, over six hundred documents have been produced in *From Protest to Challenge*, a mere tip of the iceberg of roughly twenty thousand reports, flyers, speeches, leaflets minutes, memos, letters, pamphlets, discussion

papers, press statements, trial testimonies, conference resolutions, radio broadcasts, affidavits, interviews and other primary source documents.

This 584-page volume 1 by Sheridan Johns and revised by Gail M Gerhart and Sheridan Johns is a treasure trove and classic study of South African liberation history. Sheridan Johns (1935 – 2025) was Professor Emeritus at Duke University where he began teaching political science in 1970. He studied at Amherst College and Harvard University, conducting his first research in South Africa from 1962 to 1963. He has also taught at the University of Zambia and the University of Zimbabwe, among others. Gail M Gerhart holds degrees from Harvard and Columbia Universities. She first visited South Africa in 1963 while working as a teacher in East Africa. She has lived and worked in Africa for almost thirty years. She has taught political science at the University of Nairobi, the University of Botswana, the American University of Cairo, Columbia University and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) where she was a Fulbright visiting professor in 1994. She is also co-author of volume 3, 4, 5 and 6 of *From Protest to Challenge* and the co-editor of the second edition of the series.

First published by Jacana Media in 2014, the second impression of *From Protest to Challenge* came out in 2017.