

POLITICS TODAY



AN EXECUTIVE BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR PROGRESSIVE BUSINESS

The year of united action to move South Africa forward!

Statement of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress on the occasion of the 102nd anniversary of the ANC, January 8th 2014, delivered by ANC President, Jacob G Zuma

January 11th, Mbombela, Mpumalanga

The African National Congress celebrates one hundred and two years of service to our people today.

We have gathered to pay tribute to our organisation, our people and our country for the strides we have made together, to free our country from apartheid colonialism and to build a National Democratic Society.

We meet just a few weeks after the loss of one of the greatest sons of our Movement, Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

Africa and the world descended upon our shores to celebrate the life of this giant of our struggle.

Comrade Madiba's contribution, as the first president of a democratic South Africa, laid the basis for, and continues to inform our struggle to move South Africa forward.

May his soul, and the souls of all our fallen comrades, rest in peace.

Madiba exemplified the importance of adherence to the core values and traditions of the ANC.

He was unambiguous about the fact that the ANC has always been the organisation best placed to unite the broadest cross-section of South Africans around the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution and put in place a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa, as enshrined in the Freedom Charter.

The ideals of unity and non-racialism have been cornerstones of the ANC since before our formal establishment in 1912 and were succinctly captured by former president Pixley ka Isaka Seme when he said in 1911:

"The demon of tribalism and ethnicity ... must be buried and forgotten; it has shed among us sufficient blood! We are one people".

This ideal, of a South Africa that is 'one people' remains one that the ANC continues to strive for.

Our emphasis on unity further demands that South Africans remain vigilant and actively combat the dangers of tribalism and ethnicity.

Equally, the ANC remains resolute and leads the quest for gender equality.

Our former president, Comrade OR Tambo, said that the liberation of South Africa would be incomplete until the women of this country were emancipated.

We reaffirm our commitment to all these core values and core principles of our movement, on this significant anniversary of our movement which coincides with the fifth national general elections to be held this year.

Today, on this significant 102nd anniversary, we humbly present our 2014 National Elections Manifesto together with this January 8 Statement.

The Manifesto is a pledge to move South Africa forward over the next five years,

working with the masses of our people.

Before discussing these matters let me remind you of the key anniversaries this year.

It has been 100 years since the delegation of our former leaders, Comrades John Langalibalele Dube, Sol Plaatje and Walter Rubusana travelled to Great Britain to formally protest the Native Land Act.

It has been ninety five years since the formal protests against pass laws, firstly by women in the Free State and also anti-pass campaigns organised in the former Transvaal.

It has been ninety five years since the Witwatersrand strike by African miners, and the horrendous response by the racist regime's police to these mostly peaceful protests.

We honour those who lost their lives and who were injured, during this strike.

It has been seventy years of uninterrupted youth struggles since the formation of the ANC Youth League, our preparatory school for the future leaders of the ANC.

It has been fifty years since the end of the Rivonia Trial.

And on the 27th of April, our great nation will unite in celebrating 20 years of freedom, marking that momentous achievement, when South Africa ceased to be 'the skunk of the world'.

When we celebrate the 20 years of freedom, we will do so truly proud of the

tremendous progress made in the past two decades.

It has been 20 years of democratisation, reconciliation and nation building.

Discriminatory laws have been abolished.

We sing one national anthem, fly one national flag and embrace our cultural diversity.

Non-racialism is entrenched in our Constitution which states amongst other things, that nobody will be discriminated against, on the basis of their race.

It has been 20 years of advancing workers interests, aspirations and rights.

These include trade union workplace organising, collective bargaining, equal pay for equal work, health and safety, affirmative action, skills development, minimum wages for workers in vulnerable sectors, the right to strike, and the right to peaceful protest.

It has been 20 years of championing the struggle for gender equality.

Women's voices are heard and women's issues are seriously addressed. Institutional mechanisms have been established to protect women's rights and dignity.

Progress has been made in freeing women from customs and practices that undermine their rights.

Progress made in meeting basic needs such as housing and access to water has especially benefited women.

More girls are in school and tertiary education than ever before, and more women are in employment.

Women continue to benefit from economic empowerment programmes and they are the major recipients of social security programmes.

In the past 5 years we have continued with active campaigns against the abuse of, and violence against women and children.

We have improved representation of women in parliament and government, and promoted a policy of equal representation of women and men, in all institutions of government.

It has been 20 years of peace and security for all. Overall levels of serious crime have been reduced.

We have ensured fairness and equality for all before the law and enabled access to justice to millions more South Africans.

The last five years has been a period of unprecedented economic growth and development in this country.

Our national wealth has grown to a Gross Domestic Product of more than 3.5 trillion rand and government's annual revenue has grown to 880 billion rand.

It has been five years of success since the implementation of a new HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment programme in 2009.

In this regard, we are proud that the average life expectancy of South Africans has improved from 54 years in 2009 to 60 years in 2012 due to interventions.

The mother to child transmission of HIV has decreased by 66 percent in the past five years, saving the lives of many children.

The HIV testing programme has attracted more than 20 million South Africans, demonstrating that the stigma attached to the disease is declining due to on-going campaigns and programmes.

We thank all our people for cooperating with the ANC government in ensuring the success of this HIV and AIDS turnaround strategy.

It has been five years of expanding access to education. More children are receiving quality basic education including pre-school education and early childhood development.

The gradual improvement in matric results each year since 2009 is a cause for national pride and celebration.

All our learners carry our hopes for a better and brighter future.

It has been five years of a massive increase in the number of enrolments in higher education institutions.

It has been five years of hard work in the rural development and agricultural programmes.

We have made inroads into addressing the legacy of apartheid and land removals.

Nearly 5,000 farms, comprising 4.2 million hectares, have been transferred to black people, benefiting over 200,000 families.

Nearly 80,000 land claims, totalling 3.4

million hectares, have been settled and 1.8 million people have benefited.

While we have made progress, the legacy of apartheid still persists, manifested through poverty, unemployment and inequality.

Today we unveil, in our manifesto the programmes and strategies that will help free our people from the economic and social legacy of apartheid.

The Manifesto commitments are based on the resolutions of the 53rd national conference in Mangaung which called for decisive and united action to effect economic transformation and democratic consolidation.

In Mangaung we committed ourselves to radical transformation which directly changes the apartheid patterns of economic and social development of this country.

For example, it is undisputed that the overwhelming majority of the poor and disadvantaged of our country remain Black in general and African in particular, often female and very often rural. This situation will change.

Our country is endowed with an abundance of mineral wealth, and the Freedom Charter is clear that we must ensure that our people share in the wealth of the country.

The ANC is thus moving ahead with measures to strengthen the state mining company and to ensure increased beneficiation for industrialisation.

We have also broadened Mangaung's call for increasing the share of mineral resource rents and will embark on comprehensive review of our tax system.

The ANC has adopted the National Development Plan in line with the objective to build the national democratic society.

The National Development Plan is a living and dynamic document and the overwhelming majority of South Africans support its objectives of eradicating poverty and inequality.

We urge all our people to actively participate in its implementation, to move our country forward.

Let me share with you now, our plans for the next five years, to move South Africa forward.

The ANC Manifesto contains our plans for

addressing poverty, unemployment and inequality.

We have, therefore, put radical economic transformation as the central focus of our plans for the next five years, to move South Africa forward.

Our priorities during this term shall remain education, health, rural development, land reform and food security, the creation of more jobs, decent work and sustainable livelihoods, and the fight against crime and corruption.

We are also continuing to expand access to housing and basic services and building integrated human settlements.

We will continue efforts to build a democratic developmental state.

This state will increase its strategic role in the economy and decisively intervene in favour of the interests of the people, particularly the poor and workers.

The developmental state, in partnership with organised labour, the private sector and civil society, will create conditions to accelerate inclusive growth and job creation.

At the same time, the state directly contributes to radical transformation through strategic use of development finance institutions and other public agencies.

A key component of the democratic developmental state is a disciplined, people-centred and professional public service.

The second phase of our transition will bring about the economic emancipation of our people.

South Africans must commit to take our country forward on the basis of hard work, contribution and sacrifice for equitable and shared benefits to all.

We call on all our people, government, business, labour and social organisations to actively contribute to economic transformation.

Part of the ANC's contribution will take place through our government's on-going programmes of consolidated state-led industrialisation and infrastructure development.

We will continue to build an inclusive economy which draws from the skills of all South Africans. It is an economy that

affirms our people and which reduces income inequality, as we undo the legacy of discrimination at work on the grounds of race, gender and disability.

Building an inclusive economy will include continued transformation to promote broad-based black economic empowerment.

Our on-going commitment to protecting the rights of workers find expression in our determination to deal with abusive practices related to atypical work and labour broking.

The ANC will also take practical steps to ensure that the introduction of the youth employment incentive scheme does not displace unsubsidised workers.

We also commit to investigating the modality for the introduction of a national minimum wage as a key component of reducing inequality.

The most critical problem facing South Africa is that of unemployment and particularly, youth unemployment.

The ANC will expand our already significant public employment programme, and we aim to provide 6 million work opportunities.

The majority of these jobs will be reserved for young people.

We are also increasing the number of training and skilling opportunities for young people throughout the state owned enterprises and other government entities.

Our infrastructure programme continues to generate massive numbers of sustainable jobs.

Our landscape has changed significantly through the building and improvement of hospitals, schools, airports, roads, stadia, dams and other infrastructure for basic service delivery.

This programme is complemented by our industrial and trade policies and other initiatives, which are all aimed at creating sustainable jobs and empowering South Africans to take an active part in their own development.

South Africa will produce more, cleaner energy and promote energy self-sufficiency in a manner that has regard to our development objectives.

The financial sector will be encouraged to become more inclusive and accessible as we move South Africa forward!

The ANC has consistently held that the 1913 Land Act and the resultant dispossessions are directly related to our current problems of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

Without land, we cannot grow food to end hunger and guarantee food security for all.

Without land, we cannot provide decent housing and basic services to remake our towns, cities and rural areas.

Without land, our struggle for economic emancipation will be undermined. We must provide a radical answer to the land question.

The ANC has such an answer!

Our rural development programme continues to give hope to our rural masses that their lives will change for the better.

We shall expand our rural development programmes to ensure sustainable livelihoods in rural areas.

We are confident that the ANC will, together with our people, work towards poverty eradication in the rural areas.

There is wide-spread acknowledgement that the 'willing-buyer, willing seller' principle has not been successful and it is being replaced with the just and equitable compensation principle in line with section 25 of the Constitution.

We call on our public representatives to finalise the legislation meant to speed up the expropriation of land in the public interest.

We shall grow sustainable rural enterprises and industries and intensify the development aspect of land reform. We are expanding our programmes to make sure that all land-reform farms become productive and contribute to our food security.

The Agricultural Policy Action Plan will be finalised and implemented to guide the strengthening of all components of the agricultural sector.

Indeed together, we will move South Africa forward!

Our longstanding policy of building integrated human settlements remains.

Bold programmes will be implemented to promote better located mixed income housing projects, improve housing conditions for the poor in all informal

settlements and unlock well-located land, especially state land, for affordable housing.

Amongst these, is the provision of one million housing opportunities for qualifying households over the next 5 years.

It also includes promoting integrated public transport and accelerating the roll-out of sanitation infrastructure in rural areas and informal settlements.

This will be accompanied by a further provision of basic services and infrastructure in existing informal settlements and connecting additional homes to the electricity grid.

The ANC remains committed to the progressive realisation of free education at all levels.

Our key commitments for the next 5 years are making early childhood development a priority, eradicate illiteracy, improve quality in teaching and learning in schools and to expand and build capacity in higher education and training.

The ANC will intervene, through curriculum and assessment policies to improve performance in schools.

Teacher development is key to our plans for the on-going improvement of basic education.

We shall also implement further school safety programmes.

To further expand access to higher education and training, we are opening two new universities in Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape provinces this year, 2014.

A third dedicated health sciences university will also be built.

We are also establishing 12 new Further Education and Training College campuses across the country and will refurbish two other campuses as part of government's infrastructure programme.

Our government will, working together with universities and FET colleges, intensify our efforts to support the needs of poor students.

Together, we move South Africa forward!

On health, the National Health Insurance or universal health coverage, remains our flagship programme. It will be rolled out beyond the pilot phase during the next five years.

The unprecedented scheme will ensure that the poor also gain equal access to quality medical treatment.

We also aim to improve the quality of public health care and to reform private health care to drastically bring down the costs.

We must increase the number of social service professionals to respond to the demand for social welfare services and make sure that all people who qualify for social services and grants receive them.

We further call upon the nation to reduce the burden of disease in the country by living healthy lifestyles and dealing decisively with high-risk factors, such as smoking, harmful use of alcohol, poor diet and lack of exercise.

The ANC government will also work towards the introduction of mandatory cover for retirement, disability and survivor benefits.

Together, we will move South Africa forward.

The ANC remains very clear that corruption must be fought wherever it occurs and in all its manifestations.

We shall continue to work with all sectors of society and all our anti-corruption agencies to address this scourge.

A central tender board, with representation by stakeholders, will be established to adjudicate tenders in all spheres of government.

This body will work with the chief procurement officer whose main function will be to check on pricing and adherence to procedures as well as fairness.

Public servants and public representatives will be prohibited from doing business with the state. Further measures will be developed to identify and prosecute corrupt actions by public servants and others.

ANC members and public representatives, who are found guilty of criminal activity by a court of law, are expected to step down from any position of leadership in the ANC, government and society.

Where this does not happen, the ANC will follow internal procedures, as agreed to by the 53rd National Conference, to swiftly and decisively address such instances.

On the fight against crime, we will continue to ensure that South Africans are safer and feel safer and will further reduce the levels

of crime and increase the capacity of our police and criminal justice system.

We will strengthen the anti-crime awareness programmes and introduce stronger legislation to combat substance abuse, as we move South Africa forward.

The ANC has a proud internationalist outlook. We remain committed to promoting peace, development, democracy and prosperity on the continent.

In this regard, we are actively working to strengthen African Union institutions, programmes and projects.

We shall focus on regional integration and strengthening party-to-party relations.

We re-affirm our support of peoples still struggling for freedom and democracy, most notably, the peoples of Palestine and the Western Sahara.

We continue to support efforts to end the economic blockade of Cuba and repeat our support for the release of the Cuban Five.

We express our solidarity with the people of South Sudan as they establish their fledgling country.

We express our appreciation of the South African National Defence Force peacekeeping efforts on the African continent, especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Somalia.

We shall also continue to strengthen South-South cooperation and partnership with the countries of the North.

The ANC will continue to participate in global governance institutions and to work for their reform so that their decisions promote equity and fairness across the world.

The ANC also remains committed to building a progressive movement in the world and calls upon the African diaspora to contribute to Africa's rise and prosperity.

United in our diversity, we will move our country forward!

We shall actively promote patriotism and honour our collective heritage by celebrating symbols and public reference points and the important historical and cultural sites and events of all our people.

Let me now speak about the tasks of the movement.

ANC members must recommit ourselves to the notion of service to the nation.

We will renew our peoples' contract with the nation and all activists must be at the forefront of sharing the good story of South Africa's progress with our people.

This ANC has the experience and drive to move our country forward, and our members must spread our pledge to all corners.

We call on our members, supporters and volunteers to mobilise for an overwhelming victory in the coming National Elections.

Branches of the ANC should ensure that every voter in their ward registers and goes out to vote on Election Day.

ANC volunteers are the army of the people's movement. There should be no street, village, town or city that is not reached by ANC volunteers.

We have repeated it often that unity is the rock upon which our Movement is built.

Together with the South African Communist Party, the vanguard of our Movement, we must significantly step up our political education and development efforts. This will have significant effects in building unity across our Movement and in society.

The revolutionary workers' representative, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, must be more active in guiding our collective efforts at safeguarding the rights of workers. We must all work harder to guard against certain destructive and opportunistic elements that are trying to divide this alliance partner and our Movement.

The South African National Civics Organisation has taken steps to become an even better representative of communities. We wish them a successful National Conference.

Our Leagues, as complementary structures within the ANC, have specific and focussed

roles to play within their defined constituencies and our organisation.

They must use these roles to promote our vision of a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society.

Safeguarding and promoting our core values remain amongst the most critical tasks of members and structures of the ANC.

These values include: selfless service, integrity, honesty, criticism and self-criticism and organisational discipline.

We shall develop comprehensive programmes to promote our core values and these will be combined with our expanded programme of political education and development, at all levels of the Movement.

Our branches and structures are directed to be active participants in these programmes.

Discipline is a political tool that can foster greater unity and must encompass political education, mentoring, corrective action and formal disciplinary proceedings.

The ANC is very clear that actions that bring our organisation into disrepute will not be tolerated. Every ANC member should conduct him or herself in a manner that is consistent with the core values and traditions of our Movement.

We repeat that we shall use all the measures agreed to at the 53rd Conference to deal with instances of ill-discipline.

The ANC is best placed to mobilise the broadest cross-section of society around our vision of a national democratic society.

Our branches, structures and our public representatives must therefore ensure that they develop consistent programmes of interacting with communities.

Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe is the highest honour awarded by the ANC to those who have made an outstanding contribution and

sacrifice to the liberation struggle.

This was traditionally bestowed only on the bravest warriors of the people, on those who distinguished themselves in the eyes of all the people for exceptional qualities of leadership and heroism.

We are extremely proud to confer Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe on two of our longest serving and most outstanding comrades.

They are;

- Comrade Ruth Mompoti
- Comrade Gertrude Shope

We congratulate them on this singular honour.

The ANC takes this time to honour those comrades who passed away during 2013.

These comrades made lasting contributions to our struggle for liberation and we salute their unflinching spirit and dedication which continues to be an inspiration.

It is a great honour for the ANC to present its 2014 Manifesto to you, the South African people today.

The ANC pledges to remain a loyal and faithful servant of the people of South Africa.

The commitments in our Manifesto are coherent, realistic and achievable.

As the leading political representative of South Africans, with unmatched experience, capacity and political determination, the ANC will work to mobilise and unite all our people around this Manifesto to take our country forward.

The ANC lives! The ANC leads!

The NEC declares 2014

THE YEAR OF UNITED ACTION TO MOVE SOUTH AFRICA FORWARD!

