



SPECIAL CENTENARY ISSUE

POLITICS TODAY



AN EXECUTIVE BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR PROGRESSIVE BUSINESS

EXTRACTS FROM THE STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA DELIVERED AT THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANC ON 8 JANUARY 2012 AT MANGAUNG

The African National Congress, the oldest liberation movement on the African continent, turns 100 years old today!

We have come from all corners of South Africa, Africa and the world, to celebrate this historical milestone.

It is not only a celebration for the African National Congress and its members only. It is a joyous celebration for all the people of South Africa, who, with the support of the continent and the world, destroyed colonial oppression and apartheid, and are building in its ruins, a free, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous South Africa together.

It is truly an emotional and yet very exciting and moving occasion, which fills us with great pride and joy.

We extend a special welcome to all Heads of State and Government, Eminent Persons and all our friends from the anti-apartheid movement worldwide, who have joined us for this event.

We have the pleasure to release our comprehensive January 8 statement today, which outlines our history.

I will, in this address, provide highlights of this journey of 100 years of selfless struggle.

FOUNDING OF THE ANC

- On the 8th of January 1912, the South African Native National Congress was founded at the Waaihoek church in Bloemfontein. Later called the African National Congress, it grew to become a custodian of basic democratic values, principles and practice in our country.

- The principle on which the ANC and the rest of the democratic movement have consistently stood, is stated unequivocally in the preamble of the Freedom Charter:

"... 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".

- The ANC set out to achieve that goal of founding a South Africa that was free, just and which belonged to all.

- The ANC mobilized the South African people across the racial, gender and class divides. The ANC, a disciplined force of the left with a bias towards the poor, is also a broad church that is home to all.

- The movement prides itself on having a strong historical relationship with the working class.

THE ALLIANCE

- The seeds of a unique Alliance were germinating when the ANC and the Communist Party of South Africa resolved to work together in 1929.

- The relationship with the trade union movement can be traced back to the first major trade union of Africans, the Industrial Workers Union, and later the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

- Comrade Oliver Tambo eloquently articulated the importance of the Alliance as follows;

"Ours is not merely a paper alliance, created at conference tables and formalised through the signing of documents and representing only an agreement of leaders. Our alliance is a living organism that has grown out of struggle. We have built it out of our separate and common experiences."

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

- We also salute women and recognise the pivotal role they have played in the life and growth of the ANC from the

Bantu Women's League in 1931 to the ANC Women's League in 1948.

- We also recall the Federation of South African Women which united women across the colour lines in the struggle against apartheid.
- Women had also been part of earlier campaigns. As early as 1913, women right here in Bloemfontein, marched against dompasses. Many years later, women undertook that historic march against dompasses to the Union Buildings in 1956.
- We honour the many women who have played key leadership roles in our struggle. Amongst them are Lillian Ngoyi, Bertha Gxowa, Adelaide Tambo, Albertina Sisulu, Dorothy Nyembe, Nomzamo Winnie Mandela, Margaret Gazo, Florence Mkhize, Ruth Mompati, Gertrude Shope, Florence Mophosho, Ruth First, Ray Alexander, Helen Joseph, Rahima Moosa, Sophie de Bruyn and many more!

THE YOUTH LEAGUE

- The ANC Youth League has produced outstanding leaders of our movement since its establishment in 1944, such as Anton Lembede, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, the youth of the 50s and 60s who played a leadership role in joining Umkhonto Wesizwe up to Peter Mokaba.
- The Youth League played a pivotal role in energising the ANC during the 1940s, and produced a programme of action that was adopted by the movement in 1949, influencing the mass action that characterised the Defiance Campaign.
- We recognise the militant youth of the June 1976 Soweto uprising, led by Tsietsi Mashinini and others, who challenged the myth about the might of the apartheid state.

VETERANS

- Recognising the important role of veterans in our movement, the ANC created the Veterans League in 2008, to enable these cadres to play a role in

the movement and share their experience and wisdom.

HUMAN RIGHTS

- The promotion of human rights for all has always been a key feature of the ANC since its formation.
- The ANC human rights blueprints preceded the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. This makes our movement one of the pioneers in the development of a human rights culture in the world.
- The ANC adopted its first Bill of Rights at the 1923 ANC conference, and later, at the 1943 ANC conference, the movement adopted the historic African Claims document which included a Bill of Rights.
- In another demonstration of commitment to human rights, the ANC signed the Geneva Convention of 1949, which regulates the conduct of armed conflicts and the protection of prisoners of war and civilians.

MK LEADERS

- We salute MK's illustrious commanders Joe Modise, Chris Hani, Joe Slovo, Vuyisile Mini and other leading members of MK, Solomon Mahlangu, Marcus Motaung, Telle Mogoerane, Jerry Mosolodi, Mduduzi Guma, Montsi "Obadi" Mogabudi and Monty Motloung.
- We acknowledge as well those who fought in Zimbabwe in 1967 and 1968.
- We honour Flag Boshielo who had distinguished himself in struggle since the Defiance Campaign and Faldon Mziwonke.
- We also pay a special tribute to the people of Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho and Mozambique who died during the apartheid army cross-border raids in search of MK bases.
- This occasion also enables us to pay our respects to the 134 South African patriots, most of them MK soldiers such as Solomon Mahlangu, who paid the ultimate price for freedom when

they were executed by the apartheid regime in Pretoria.

OLIVER TAMBO AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

- The ANC owes a great deal of gratitude to its President Oliver Tambo who worked tirelessly to establish friendships and solidarity across the world and helped to mobilise the world against the apartheid regime.
- President Tambo visited Moscow in April 1963 and developed strong relations between the Soviet Union and the ANC.
- The ANC also acknowledges the support we received from socialist countries. We are also indebted to countries such as Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark for their support.
- The people of Zambia, through their independence movement and mass organisations, received and assisted our movement even prior to their independence.
- Angola, under the leadership of Agostinho Neto, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and the MPLA, served as a secure rear base for our army and its personnel until 1988.
- We single out Cuba for her unwavering solidarity politically and militarily.
- Tanzania became our second home.
- Botswana played a very important role in our struggle
- We are grateful to Uganda, which provided political support and bases for MK in 1989.
- We thank our immediate neighbours, Swaziland and Lesotho where many of our cadres stayed and from where we ran some of our operations.
- We thank the people of Mozambique for solidarity.
- We highlight most of Africa - Zimbabwe, Algeria, Guinea (Conakry),

Ethiopia, Benin, Nigeria and others who provided all kinds of support.

- We thank the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations which accepted the ANC and PAC as legitimate representatives of the South African people instead of the apartheid regime.
- We also register our gratitude to the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

SUPPORT INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA

- We pay tribute to comrades inside the country who enhanced the political activities from the underground and influenced political activity in the country.
- Special mention can be made of comrades like Joe Gqabi, Winnie Mandela, Harry Gwala, Zoli Malindi, Mme Lesia, Dorothy Myembe, Lawrence and Rita Ndzanga, Samson Ndou, Albertina Sisulu, Helen Joseph, Bertha Gxowa and others, who continued the link with the ANC in exile.
- In Soweto community leaders such as Dr Nthato Motlana and others assisted students during the Soweto uprising.
- The leader of the Black Consciousness Movement, Steve Biko.

CULTURE

- Culture continued to be an arena of struggle. We acknowledge the role of artists such as Miriam Makeba, Hugh Masekela, Jonas Gwangwa, Julian Bahula, Caiphus Semanya, Letta Mbulu, Dorothy Masuka, Harry Belafonte and the Amandla Cultural Ensemble, the MK cultural group and others who kept the spirit of the struggle alive around the world.

LOCAL SUPPORT AND CHURCHES

- In August 1983, history was made when more than 400 organisations gathered in Mitchell's Plain in Cape Town and founded the United Democratic Front.

- Formations such as the South African National Civics Organisation, student organizations, traditional, religious, community organizations and those representing academics, lawyers, workers, sport and others played a key role in the activities of the UDF.
- The role of the church was also more pronounced. The ANC has had a strong relationship with the church since its inception.
- The World Council of Churches and the South African Council of Churches worked tirelessly in the promotion of justice and the fight against apartheid, mobilizing the church around the world.
- We acknowledge the critical role of church leaders such as Father Trevor Huddleston, the Reverend Beyers Naude, Archbishop Denis Hurley, Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Reverend Alan Boesak, Sister Bernard Ncube and a host of others in fighting for a free and democratic South Africa.

A NEW SOUTH AFRICA

- When the ANC and other organisations were unbanned in February 1990, freedom had come at a great price.
- Leaders were released from jails across the country, underground activists began to operate openly, and others began returning home from exile.
- The ANC began to establish legitimate branch and regional structures of the movement inside the country.
- Nelson Mandela was elected President and Oliver Tambo as National Chairperson at the 1991 ANC National Conference, the first inside the country after the unbanning.
- The ANC was committed to ending apartheid through a series of negotiations and participated fully in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA).

- The ANC played a leading role in shaping the nature, form, process and content of CODESA and its outcome.
- The Boipatong massacre and the tragic assassination of Comrade Chris Hani threatened to derail the talks. President Mandela provided matured leadership, together with the leadership of the ANC, saved the situation and enabled us to focus on the goals at hand.
- We are proud of the fact that the negotiations took place on South African soil, managed by South Africans themselves. The ANC, as always, promoted unity by bringing together negotiating parties under its wing as a united front.
- On 27 April 1994, millions of South Africans - black and white - voted in the first democratic elections.
- The leadership of the ANC, under the guidance of President Mandela united the nation behind the goal of reconciliation and nation building.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to deal with the mysteries and painful atrocities of the past.

THE ANC AS GOVERNMENT

- The first seventeen years of freedom have been successful. The ANC has laid a sound foundation for socio-economic development, although challenges remain.
- The vision for the first two decades of freedom are encapsulated in the following pillars:
 - The building of a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist society.
 - Deepening our democracy, the culture of human rights and people's participation in changing their lives for the better.
 - Meeting basic needs and developing human resources.

- Building the economy and creating jobs.
- Combating crime and corruption.
- Transforming the state.
- Building a better Africa and a better world.
- The first few years after the end of apartheid was about putting in place the correct legal framework and mechanisms. The second phase was about executing our plans and programmes.
- We have succeeded in addressing the many challenges facing South Africa. We have moved some way to ensure access to basic services in areas such as health care, social security, housing, electricity, water and sanitation, education and others.

THE FUTURE

- During this year, 2012, our nation must renew our determination to build a South Africa founded on the principles of the Freedom Charter and our democratic Constitution.
- We must bring new energy and new ideas into the kind of society we want to build over the next few decades.

- As the ANC prepares for its Policy Conference in June and its 53rd National Conference in December 2012, we call on all South Africans to join a national dialogue on the future of the country.
- This debate should be based on our common commitment to build a caring society that is truly non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, prosperous and united in its diversity.
- With regards to the way forward, we have identified the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality as needing attention.
- Principally, Africans, women and youth continue to carry a disproportionate burden of the challenges.
- Over the next decade, both the ANC and all organs of state, shall pay a single-minded and undivided attention in order to overcome these triple challenges.
- Our education and training system should be the cornerstone of all efforts to radically transform South Africa and build a truly non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, united and prosperous society.
- As we move into the future, the ANC will renew its internal systems and

processes in order to prepare and produce new generations of leadership for our country, whose integrity and passion to serve our country is unquestionable.

- As we move forward, the ANC will intensify its programme to recruit and train young people who show tremendous potential, skills and talents in all fields of human endeavour.
- We are determined to move to the second centenary with a more rejuvenated organisation that is strategically positioned to continue to lead the people of our country and continent in their tireless and ceaseless quest for a better life, in a just and more humane world.
- In this regard, the most urgent task facing us is to speed up the building of a national democratic society, wherein all South Africans enjoy an improved quality of life, especially the working class and the poor.

