



Public Statement

October 24, 2022

Former President Mbeki's address to the Strategic Dialogue Group AGM

The SDG has noted the deliberate distortion of remarks made by former ANC President Cde Thabo Mbeki during the Strategic Dialogue Group Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on the 22nd of October in Johannesburg.

Contrary to the claim by some within the ANC, Cde Mbeki did not attack President Cyril Ramaphosa. Rather, he called for a discussion on the possible impact of certain matters that are in the public domain on the ANC. Such a discussion is a revolutionary duty; it is not an attack on any leader. Those who insist otherwise want an ANC of ostriches who bury their heads deep in the sand. They want us to *Hear Nothing See Nothing and Say Nothing* while the movement implodes.

The theme for the SDG's AGM which Cde Mbeki addressed was: "Renewal: The Cornerstone of Our Future". We sought to exchange ideas about measures required to rescue our country and the ANC from collapse. In the context of this theme, reflecting on the issues that President Mbeki discussed was unavoidable.

Cadres and members of the ANC need no reminder that the Movement and the country face many challenges which must be addressed if we are to avoid collapse. We need **more and not less considered reflection, discussion and debate**.

While we agree that party matters must be debated internally, this should not be used to stifle debate in our ranks. After all, what is impermissible about discussing matters that are already in the public domain?

We should be mindful that South Africans, the peoples of Africa and the developing world are engaged in discussion about the state of the ANC and the country. The ANC has an obligation to engage these masses about their concerns. Hiding behind (apolitical) fig leaves is not going to help anybody!

As President Mbeki's hosts, the SDG categorically condemns all attempts to distort the message of the renewal of the ANC that he eloquently conveyed to our AGM. In line with our previous requests to engage, the SDG stands ready to engage with our leadership at Luthuli House. Our commitment to the renewal of the ANC, which impacts positively on country, remains unchanged.

About the SDG: *The SDG is a progressive think tank comprised of individuals who are members of the ANC and were mostly leaders of student and/or youth organisations during part of the very turbulent period 1980s to early 1990s.*

Issued by the Strategic Dialogue Group

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