



JANUARY 8
STATEMENT **2026**



**2026: YEAR OF DECISIVE ACTION
TO FIX LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND
TRANSFORM THE ECONOMY**

8 JANUARY 2026





**JANUARY 8TH STATEMENT
OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
114TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANC**

Comrades and compatriots,
The peoples of Africa,
The progressive forces of the world,
Fellow South Africans:

We bring you warm revolutionary greetings and best wishes from the National Executive Committee for the New Year.

We gather here in Moruleng, in the heartland of Moses Kotane Local Municipality, in the platinum province of the North West, to mark the historic milestone of the 114th anniversary of the founding of the African National Congress.

On 8 January 1912, our founders and forebears convened an epoch-making conference at the Waaihoek Wesleyan Church in Mangaung. They established the ANC as a national movement to unite the African people, a weapon of struggle for the liberation of all the oppressed who had been robbed of their land and denied basic human rights.



On this historic occasion we pay tribute to the warriors, founders and freedom fighters who made supreme sacrifices during the long journey to freedom and democracy.

We focus particularly on those who emerged from our host province.

We salute our warrior kings, queens and chiefs who opposed colonialism, apartheid and the Bantustan system: Kgosi Montshioa, Kgosi Sechele I, Kgosi Linchwe I, Kgosi Tidimane Pilane, Kgosi Ramotshere Moiloa, Kgosi Lebone Molotlegi, Kgosi Lekolwane Sebogodi and Kgosi Mabe. We urge present-day traditional leaders across the length and breadth of our country to emulate the example of service and loyalty to the people demonstrated by these outstanding royal patriots.

We also pay tribute to the founders and builders of our movement who came from, or struggled in, this province from the 1800s through the 1980s. These include Sol Plaatje, the first Secretary-General of the ANC and editor of *Koranta ea Becoana* in Mafikeng; George Montshioa, the first Recording Secretary and one of the drafters of the ANC's first Constitution; Moses Kotane, Treasurer-General of the ANC and SACP General Secretary; Dr Silas Modiri Molema, former Treasurer-General and National Secretary; Josephine Palmer Mpama, leading trade union organiser, leader of the SACP and the women's movements; Ruth Mompati, former NEC member and founding member of the Federation of South African Women; Stephen Segale, former leader of the ANC Youth League and member of the Transvaal ANC Executive Committee; Victor Sefora, a fierce opponent of the Bophuthatswana Bantustan; JB Marks, Treasurer General of the South African Communist Party, President of the Transvaal ANC and NEC member; Job Tabane, also known as Cassius Maake, an NEC member assassinated by apartheid security forces; Edna Molewa, former NEC member, Premier and Cabinet Minister; Dr Sam Motsumenyane, a pioneer of black business and ANC veteran; Essop and Aziz Pahad, long-serving NEC members and Minister and Deputy Minister; Onkgopotse Tiro and Barney Molokoane, MK commander



of the June 16 Detachment, responsible for the SASOL sabotage.

As we mark the 70th anniversary of the 1956 Women's March, we honour and acknowledge the immense contribution of women to the national liberation struggle. In this province, we highlight the struggles of the rural women of Leburutshe and surrounding villages, who mobilised and marched against the pass laws in 1957. Under the leadership of Gertrude Mpekwa, an outstanding organiser, and working alongside Mmamorongwa Keebine, Sina Mmadithobane Tsibogo, Mmabophene Sebogodi, Motlagomang Mokathlenyane, Borale Sekgabale and Tsantsarara Konyana, these women demonstrated extraordinary courage. Many of these leaders later joined uMkhonto weSizwe's revered Luthuli Detachment.

We also pay tribute to Kgosi Ramotshere Moiloa, a fearless opponent of apartheid. Kgosi Moiloa played a decisive role in radicalising communities around Leburutshe in the 1950s during his battles with the apartheid regime under Hendrik Verwoerd. He was instrumental in turning Zeerust into a gateway and safe passage into exile through Botswana, supported by an underground network led by Fish Keitseng, Mogajane Ranto, Kwata Senne and Simon Senne. He recruited young people from Leburutshe to join uMkhonto weSizwe in Tanzania.

We are honoured to have amongst us seven surviving members of the Luthuli Detachment: Morwaagage Mogapi, Ntolopi Montshusi, June Pholo, Radilori Moumakwe, Reid Ramasire, Spokes Mothupi and Daniel Kena.

We honour Kgosi Lebone Molotlegi of Bafokeng for his uncompromising struggle against the Bantustan system.

All these patriots occupy a special place in the national Roll of Honour of the pioneers of freedom, who consistently put the interests of the people first.



Our 114th anniversary coincides with the 50th anniversary of the 1976 Student Uprisings.

We take this opportunity to salute the Young Lions of our struggle for freedom and democracy.

The generation of 1976 injected urgency and renewed dynamism into the liberation movement, necessitating the intensification and expansion of political and military training. This generation became the backbone of the mass democratic movement of the 1980s – trade unions, civic and women’s organisations, and youth and student formations – which responded overwhelmingly to President Oliver Tambo’s call to make apartheid unworkable and South Africa ungovernable.

We call upon the generation of 1976 and the 1980s to continue to dedicate their lives to the renewal of the movement and the ongoing struggle to complete the unfinished mission of national liberation and transformation of South Africa into a National Democratic Society. The struggle continues.

We further call upon today’s generation of youth to define its mission in this new phase of struggle and organise effectively to become the principal agents of social and economic transformation. The struggle continues.

We thank the people of the North West for their continued overwhelming support for the ANC. In the 2024 national and provincial elections, the North West was among the top three best performing ANC provinces, together with Limpopo and Eastern Cape. These rural provinces remain burdened by the persistent legacy of apartheid colonialism, especially rural underdevelopment, spatial injustice and inequalities.

The North West occupies an increasingly critical position in South Africa’s national economy, with its rich mineral resources. It has become

the major producer of the platinum group of metals. It is also strong in ecotourism, cultural industries and agriculture. The interventions by the ANC-led government have increased participation of the historical disadvantaged in the mining sector as owners, managers, professionals and workers. Through our land restitution and reform programmes, many communities now own the land. Commercial farmers and entrepreneurs in ecotourism have emerged. These efforts will be intensified and accelerated.

The role of traditional leadership in the effective governance and development of communities is critical in this province and across the country. We call on government to work constructively with our traditional leaders as part of a united effort to build vibrant rural communities and local economies.

THIRTY YEARS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION

This year we celebrate 30 years since the adoption of our Constitution. The Constitution is the birth certificate of our Nation, it defines and shapes who we are and aspire to become.

We therefore call on South Africans to celebrate this achievement as a living document, recognized globally as amongst the best in the world.

Thirty years ago, President Nelson Mandela signed the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa into law at Sharpeville on 10 December 1996, international Human Rights Day.

Through this Constitution the people of South Africa, declared for all our country and the world to know that:

*"We, the people of South Africa
Recognise the injustices of our past;
Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;*



Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and

Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to:

- *Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;*
- *Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;*
- *Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and*
- *Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.”*

The Constitution is the supreme law of the land, the basis for the transformation of our society into a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic state founded on the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms.

Our Constitution is both revolutionary and transformative and advances the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution:

First, to build a South African nation, united in its diversity.

Second, to build a democratic and developmental state that meets the needs of the people.

Third, to build a transformed, inclusive and thriving economy that works for all South Africans.

And finally, to build a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society based on the best of human values.

The ANC is committed to pursue the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution, even under the most challenging conditions, including in the Government of National Unity and coalition governments.

The Constitution has profoundly transformed South Africa's political and legal landscape into a constitutional democracy.

The Constitution is progressive because it not only recognises the injustices and inequalities of the past but places an obligation on government and citizens – women and men, young and old – to work to *"heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights"*.

Our Constitution requires government to pursue transformation policies that meet people's socio-economic needs and redress the injustices and inequalities created by colonialism, apartheid and patriarchy, to *"improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person"*.

It affirms that the people shall govern, that all shall be equal before the law and that dignity, work, shelter, education, health, social security and basic safety are not privileges but fundamental rights to be enjoyed by every citizen.

For three decades, our Constitution has anchored democratic governance, created independent institutions, expanded access to justice and enabled major social advances in housing, education, health-care, water, electricity, social protection and infrastructure. These gains have raised the standard of living of millions who lived on the margins of the apartheid state.

It has empowered decisive action to dismantle the legacies of racial, gender and class super-exploitation.



Yet, this 30th anniversary takes place amid increasingly strident attacks on constitutional values, the rule of law and a rules-based international order.

THE BALANCE OF FORCES IN 2026

Across the world, the values of democracy, equality, equity, inclusion, human solidarity, gender equality and social justice are under attack. The fundamental assertion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that, “*... the inherent dignity and ... the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,*” is under threat.

These universal values of the Declaration of Human Rights are enshrined in the Freedom Charter and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

This attack seeks to delegitimise any government that aims to address inequalities, whether between nations, communities, genders, races and individuals. It seeks to undermine the existing rule-based order in the world, and return human civilization to an era of might, privilege and subjugation.

Sixty-five years ago, when accepting the 1961 Nobel Peace Prize, Chief Albert Luthuli said:

“...our cause is the cause of the liberation of people who are denied freedom. Only on this basis can the peace of Africa and the world be firmly founded. Our cause is the cause of equality between nations and peoples. Only thus can the brotherhood (and sisterhood) of man (humanity) be firmly established.”

The vast majority of South Africans, and indeed of global humanity, embrace these values of freedom, equality, non-racialism, non-sexism and human solidarity.



However, there is an increasingly vocal minority in our country that make common cause with this global attack and actively propagate falsehoods.

Their aim is to undermine South Africa's constitutional democracy, non-racialism, non-sexism and the transformation project. They employ multifaceted tactics, including the propagation of blatant falsehoods such as claims of "*white genocide*", to attract sympathy and solidarity from global racist movements and individuals.

On the one hand, they form and fund political parties designed to fragment the motive forces of change. On the other hand, they sow the seeds of regime change, establish parallel state structures and foment secessionist tendencies.

Reversing the gains of democracy by any means has become an increasingly open objective of domestic anti-transformation forces and their global allies.

Therefore, given these challenges, the current conjuncture demands that we build the broadest united front to defend, consolidate and advance the National Democratic Revolution, our Constitutional democracy and status as a sovereign country in the family of nations.

We must defend, consolidate and advance the Constitution and the institutions of our constitutional democracy and ensure that they work for all South Africans.

We must defend, consolidate and advance the rights of workers, the informal sector, small businesses, farmers and the middle strata.

We must defend, consolidate and advance quality basic services and the expansion of housing, education, healthcare, electricity, water, sanitation, the social security net, roads, broadband services and infrastructure to millions of South Africans.



It is our revolutionary duty to defend, consolidate and advance women's rights, the war on gender-based violence and femicide and the building of a non-sexist South Africa.

We are required to defend, consolidate and advance the rights of young men and women to education, skills training, jobs and economic opportunities, and opportunities to use their energy, creativity and innovation to build their communities and country.

However, we must also recognise that our own weaknesses and failures in service delivery, governance, the slow pace of economic growth and high levels of unemployment have demoralised and alienated many individuals and communities.

We cannot blame our people if they question whether our democracy, our Constitution, our economy and indeed the ANC and the Alliance really work for them. It is these weaknesses and failures that the tasks outlined below seek to address.

PRIORITIES AND TASKS: UPDATE ON 2025 AND TASKS FOR 2026

In order to defend, consolidate and advance our organisation, government and country we have identified six tasks for progressive and patriotic forces in 2026:

1. Fixing local government and improving basic services.
2. Speeding up economic transformation, inclusive growth and job creation.
3. Wage war on crime and corruption; GBVF as a National Disaster.
4. Building a South Africa that belongs to all through the National Dialogue and the 30th anniversary of the Constitution.

5. Making organisational renewal visible and irreversible.
6. Building a better Africa and a better world.

TASK 1. FIXING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND IMPROVING BASIC SERVICES

In last year's January 8 Statement, we emphasised ending load shedding and ensuring a consistent water supply by upgrading, maintaining and expanding municipal infrastructure, while tackling sabotage and corruption.

We have seen dramatic improvement in electricity provision by Eskom, alongside increased private investment in electricity generation.

However, municipal load reduction continues to disrupt daily life. Load reduction is a mechanism municipalities use to manage debt to Eskom. We call on all electricity users to pay for the services they use and to support government in preventing illegal connections that cause overloads and outages. We also call on municipalities to strengthen billing and collection systems, honour debt-repayment commitments to Eskom, and act decisively against illegal connections and vandalism.

Using new solar and battery technology, the Department of Electricity and Energy will connect 20 rural communities each year, ensuring access to clean and affordable electricity in communities not yet connected to the grid.

Last year, we elevated water security as a priority task for 2025. Government currently has 13 major water resource infrastructure projects under implementation, including the Lesotho Highlands Water Project to provide additional water to Gauteng and the uMkhomazi Water Project to provide additional water to eThekweni. In the North West, the Department has allocated R1.2 billion to improve access to water services.



We call on municipalities to ensure proper project preparation, the use of skilled contractors and disciplined implementation so that these projects benefit communities.

The ANC calls on all government agencies to provide ongoing support to municipalities to access the Trading Services Grant, so that they can leverage private-sector investment in municipal water services.

The ANC also calls on all municipalities to ring-fence water revenue and intensify efforts to reduce water losses in a water-scarce country. Accordingly, ANC councillors must educate communities on careful water use and on paying for the water they consume.

Households that cannot pay for water and electricity must be placed on the indigent register.

At the March 2025 Water Indaba, municipalities committed to using water tankers only for emergencies, rather than for regular provision. ANC branches and communities must assist the police in tackling those who sabotage water infrastructure to sustain water-tankering businesses. We call on law enforcement to ensure that those responsible are investigated and prosecuted.

Over the next three years, national government will invest R54 billion to repair water and electricity infrastructure in Buffalo City, Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, eThekweni, Johannesburg, Mangaung, Nelson Mandela Bay and Tshwane.

In today's digital age, connectivity and internet access have become basic necessities, comparable to water and electricity. We are expanding connectivity in communities and public spaces through the SA Connect programme and partnerships with the private sector. We call on all municipalities to make services and payments available online to improve access for citizens.

Local government remains the sphere closest to citizens' daily lives, where the injunction of the Freedom Charter that "*the people shall govern*", must find its most direct expression. Municipalities must therefore fulfil their basic obligations: fix potholes, remove refuse regularly, keep communities clean and green, and provide clean water and sanitation.

Municipalities must also increase funding for infrastructure maintenance and strengthen administrative capacity. They must build in-house capacity, especially functional yellow fleets and skilled personnel, to fix water leaks, potholes, and power outages, and to deliver basic cleaning and greening services.

Municipal administration must be ethical and capable, with professional management insulated from undue political interference and capture.

We call on our employees in government to fast-track the review of the local government funding model and the equitable share policy so that municipalities are placed on a sustainable financial footing. We also call on municipal administrations to strengthen financial management so that scarce resources are used first and foremost to provide services and to develop our towns and communities.

We call on all ANC structures, progressive civil society and community organisations to participate actively in the review of the White Paper on Local Government to strengthen municipalities' ability to meet their developmental objectives.

Too often, public trust in local government is undermined by councillors who are distant from their constituents and perceived as unresponsive to local problems. It is imperative that ANC councillors reconnect with their wards and restore public trust.

Last year, at the Councillor Roll-Call meeting, we said that every ANC ward must have an active Ward Committee. Councillors and



branch members must undertake regular door-to-door work and provide feedback on service delivery issues. Even when problems cannot be resolved immediately, Councillors must communicate and support residents.

Today, we reiterate that ANC councillors must build close working relationships with community-based formations to ensure two-way communication, engagement and feedback on matters of local concern.

We call on all ANC-led municipalities to implement Revenue Collection Plans to improve collection rates, support bulk purchases of water and electricity, and fix billing systems.

We call on government to ensure that debt owed to municipalities is eliminated and that all municipalities pay Eskom and water boards for bulk utilities purchased.

Local government has a central role in economic development and job creation. We call on all municipalities to ensure that local economic development plans reflect the comparative advantages of each area and build partnerships with the private sector.

Municipalities must revitalise industrial parks and Special Economic Zones to attract investment that supports local manufacturing and creates jobs.

Municipalities must review by-laws to improve the ease of doing business and reduce red tape for local SMMEs and informal businesses by speeding up approvals and reducing licensing costs.

We call on all financial institutions to tailor support programmes for local small enterprises in townships, villages and rural areas.

We call on municipalities to optimise public employment programmes and to implement preferential procurement that supports local businesses, especially township- and village-based enterprises.

**TASK 2. SPEEDING UP ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION,
INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND JOB CREATION**

A transformed, inclusive and thriving economy that works for all South Africans is the central objective of the ANC's economic strategy.

Our strategy for inclusive growth includes accelerated infrastructure investment, forward-looking industrial policy, improved service delivery, land reform, transformative spatial planning, black economic empowerment and supportive macroeconomic policies. Growth must drive radical social and economic transformation through the redistribution of wealth and opportunity.

After fifteen years of low growth, we are seeing signs that the economy is approaching a turning point. Projections indicate that through disciplined implementation of the ANC Ten-Point Economic Action Plan we can meet our targets on inclusion, growth and employment.

Our investment philosophy must be coherent and transformative. It must enable private-sector investment in national infrastructure revitalisation through diverse financing mechanisms, while maintaining strategic state ownership and effective regulatory control.

A social compact that unites government, labour, civil society and business around a coherent national investment strategy to accelerate growth and development is an immediate priority.

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.

We have agreed that industrial policy must be a leading instrument of economic development, positioning diverse industries to succeed in an increasingly digitised and decarbonised world economy. We



reaffirm our commitment to broad-based structural transformation and mandate the implementation of local content targets to support re-industrialisation.

We will advance digital transformation and inclusion, and invest in science, innovation and research.

We are making significant headway in improving the efficiency of our railways and ports. Rail freight volume increased from 150 million tonnes in 2023 to 174 million tonnes in 2025.

Support for local informal businesses and micro-enterprises will be central to our programme of transformation and inclusive growth. Small farmers, artisanal miners, mothers who sell vetkoek and chisanya, township beauticians and hairdressers, and local tailors and seamstresses are among the many rural, village and township entrepreneurs who must be the first targets of financial, skills and other support programmes.

Youth unemployment remains one of our most urgent challenges. Since October 2020, new public employment programmes have created earning opportunities for over 2 million participants.

The NGC mandated government to reform the skills system to better meet the needs of the economy and to ensure that young people are equipped for employment and entrepreneurship. This includes strengthening basic education and reviewing the SETA system.

Land reform remains one of the most urgent tasks of the National Democratic Revolution. While progress has been made, much more is required to give effect to the constitutional requirement for redress and equitable access to land.

Key tasks include strengthening support for land reform beneficiaries, accelerating the processing of outstanding restitution claims and resolving disputes more efficiently.

We must also address urban land reform, as most South Africans live in cities where access to well-located land and housing remains deeply unequal.

Disruptions to global trading systems threaten South African exports. Government will accelerate export-market diversification. South Africa also plays a leading role in implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area to grow exports across the continent.

TASK 3. WAGE WAR ON CRIME AND CORRUPTION; GBVF AS A NATIONAL DISASTER

South Africa continues to face a challenging criminal landscape, including violent crime – particularly murder and gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) – gang violence in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Gauteng; illegal mining across several provinces; and drug trafficking in Limpopo, Western Cape and Mpumalanga.

Crime, corruption and GBVF undermine the gains of freedom, shared prosperity, constitutional democracy and the National Democratic Revolution.

Our primary goal remains the reduction of violent and organised crime and the eradication of gender-based violence and femicide. This will be achieved through enhanced community mobilisation, visible and effective policing, and improved use of intelligence and technology. It requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to address the social, economic and spatial drivers of crime and violence.

During 2025, guided by the Integrated Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy, the police continued to work with other law enforcement agencies to dismantle organised crime syndicates and combat financial and violent crime. Operation Shanel recorded successes in arrests, firearm recoveries and vehicle seizures. Multi-disciplinary Economic Infrastructure Task Teams operating in 20 hotspots also



achieved several significant breakthroughs.

In 2025, government took a major step by classifying GBVF as a national disaster. Work has since begun with all stakeholders to determine how this classification can be implemented most effectively.

The ANC Women's League, working with civil society organisations and government, has continued to lead efforts to build a united front against GBVF. Throughout 2025, the League organised marches and demonstrations in support of survivors and victims, raised public awareness, conducted civic education, utilised social media platforms and demanded decisive government action, stricter laws and improved police accountability in GBVF cases.

International migration is a global phenomenon, affecting both the African continent and South Africa. Government continues to strengthen immigration management through the Border Management Authority, the review of immigration policies and legislation, and regulations that prioritise employment for South Africans, particularly in the context of high unemployment.

Community Policing Forums (CPFs) remain critical in the fight against crime and GBVF. Over the past year, efforts to strengthen CPFs have continued through the use of technology, including the rollout of a CPF application; the development of community safety plans tailored to local conditions; and strengthened cooperation among stakeholders, including SAPS, business, communities and private security providers.

Rooting out corruption remains an overriding priority. 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. Regular reporting on the implementation of the Zondo Commission recommendations has become standard practice, alongside significant

progress in strengthening institutional architecture and legal reforms to prevent and combat corruption.

In August 2025, government established the Madlanga Commission to investigate and report on the veracity, scope and impact of allegations relating to the infiltration of law enforcement, intelligence and associated institutions within the criminal justice system by criminal syndicates.

To consolidate the fight against GBVF, crime and corruption, the ANC calls on government in 2026 to:

- Continue the focused implementation of, and reporting on, the recommendations of the Commission on State Capture; respond promptly and decisively to the findings of the Madlanga Commission to 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.
- Implement the designation of GBVF as a national disaster through a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, and accelerate the implementation of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF.
- Confront gang violence by working closely with communities, CPFs and other stakeholders, drawing on recent studies and evidence from the Western Cape and Gauteng.
- Strengthen rural and farm security across the country.
- Address porous borders by strengthening the Border Management Authority as part of efforts to combat illegal mining, organised crime and terrorism, and update laws and policies to reflect the realities of global migration.



TASK 4. BUILDING A SOUTH AFRICA THAT BELONGS TO ALL THROUGH THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE AND THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONSTITUTION

During the year in which we celebrate 30 years since the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic, we reaffirm the vision of a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South African nation consistent with the vision of the Freedom Charter that "*South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white*".

The liberation movement has consistently opposed the notion of South Africa as comprising a multiplicity of separate nations; of a number of distinct nationalities competing with each other. ANC policy regards our diversity as representative of different components of a single nation, whose unity will and can be realised through democracy.

The ANC is committed to an inclusive and people-led National Dialogue that reflects the hopes, frustrations and aspirations of the South African people. The National Dialogue should produce a widely inclusive Social Compact with broad support to guide the country forward and inform future National Development Plans.

The ANC has always placed dialogue at the centre of our struggle for liberation and nation-building. From the adoption of the Women's Charter and Freedom Charter, to the negotiations that brought an end to apartheid, it is through dialogue that we have overcome division and built consensus.

Therefore, the ANC calls on its members, alliance partners, mass democratic formations and all South Africans to actively participate in this National Dialogue. It is through open, principled engagement that we will define a renewed national vision and construct a new social compact anchored in shared responsibility.

Celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Constitution provides an opportunity to defend, consolidate and advance the values and vision of the Constitution.

In 2026, key tasks for ANC and Alliance structures, and for all citizens, are therefore to:

- Participate in and organise dialogue activities on key issues facing communities and sectors through an inclusive, intergenerational process.
- Use the dialogues to assess progress and challenges, educate on rights, accountability and responsibilities, and work together to build vibrant and safe communities.
- Implement a year-long celebration of the Constitution – its vision, relevance, national values, sovereignty and patriotism – and deepen civic education, active citizenship, youth mobilisation, mutual accountability and developmental governance. This programme will include encouraging citizens to identify areas where the Constitution should be strengthened.

TASK 5. MAKING ORGANISATIONAL RENEWAL VISIBLE AND IRREVERSIBLE

The renewal of the ANC and the Alliance is the most pressing organisational task of this generation. We need to act with urgency, determination and courage in making renewal more visible and irreversible. We fully understand that we either renew or perish.

Renewal must be both personal and organisational. As individual members of the ANC, we must show in our daily conduct and interaction with society that we represent the best values of our movement.

We must once again be known for upholding the highest standards of excellence, integrity, humility, hard work and competence.

We will run the ANC strictly, with zero tolerance of corruption, ill-discipline and factionalism.



We will govern our country effectively, ethically and competently.

We are making tremendous progress in reviving political education. The introduction of a compulsory Foundation Course for all ANC members is showing great promise in contributing to organisational renewal and rebuilding.

More than 125,000 members from 1,600 branches have undergone political training throughout the year. This training will be intensified in 2026 to cover every ANC member. Advanced level courses will be rolled out to build leadership and governance capacity across the organisation.

The NEC introduced a new accountability framework that is now being applied to hold all ANC elected leaders and public representatives accountable. We are implementing a monitoring, evaluation and performance system. The 5th National General Council (NGC), held in December 2025, stressed that we must enforce consequence-management on non-performance and misconduct, while visibly promoting meritocracy, integrity and competence.

The strengthening of the Integrity Commission's terms of reference and the step-aside rule has ensured that ANC members comply with the need to protect the image of the movement and act accordingly. The introduction of a compulsory ethics course will improve the ethical environment in the movement. We call on all ANC members to take the training very seriously.

In 2025, we introduced the Branch Functionality Barometer that focuses on building activist ANC branches that undertake continuous grassroots mobilisation through community campaigns, door-to-door engagements, sectoral work, izimbizo and other mass work.

In 2026, we will undertake a nation-wide campaign to rebuild every branch of the ANC into an activist branch. We call on all ANC members to be involved in grassroots campaigns to solve community



problems and promote community development and safety.

Organisational renewal also includes the renewal and reconfiguration of the Alliance so that we collectively and comprehensively defend, consolidate and advance a progressive and transformative agenda domestically and globally.

The NGC raised serious concerns about the current weaknesses in the Alliance. The resolution of the South African Communist Party (SACP) to contest elections has serious implications for the National Democratic Revolution and cohesion of the Alliance.

The ANC will not abandon its responsibility to unite the Alliance and develop a common approach to the renewal and reconfiguration programme. The NEC will convene a series of Alliance meetings in this regard.

We want to make it clear: all ANC members will be required, as per the Constitution, to campaign for ANC victory in the forthcoming local government elections. There must be no confusion.

Winning the local government elections decisively will enable the ANC to lead communities in the forward march towards a truly non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, united and prosperous society.

TASK 6. BUILDING A BETTER AFRICA AND A BETTER WORLD

Across the world the values of equity, democracy, human solidarity, inclusion, gender equality and social justice are under attack. This trend poses an existential threat to peaceful coexistence among nations.

In this context, the ANC must continually assess how its international policy promotes South Africa's national interest, protects our sovereignty and constitutional order and advances the wellbeing,



safety and prosperity of our people, both at home and on the African continent.

Current global developments make the task of silencing the guns on our continent more urgent, as well as deepening integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area and forging common African positions on global issues, including peace, climate change, trade rules and sustainable development.

Our Pan-African struggles against slavery, colonialism and apartheid have given us a profound appreciation of self-determination, solidarity and sovereignty. It is for this reason that we continue to call for an immediate end to the assault on Gaza and for meaningful negotiations toward the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state living in peace alongside Israel. Anything short of Palestinian self-determination and the recognition of fundamental human rights will not bring lasting peace to the region.

It is also for this reason that we stand in solidarity with the peoples of Western Sahara, Cuba and Venezuela in their respective struggles to secure self-determination and sovereign integrity.

In this perilous global environment, South Africa must continue to advance the African Agenda, promote its national interest, uphold multilateralism and non-alignment, and strengthen South-South and North-South cooperation.

Failure to do so would betray the Freedom Charter's injunction that there shall be peace and friendship and the Constitution's injunction that South Africa must take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations. We must therefore continue to work toward a more inclusive, just, stable and peaceful international order.



THEME OF THE YEAR

When our forbearers gathered at Waaihoek Wesleyan Church on 8 January 1912 to form the ANC, the odds they faced were overwhelming. However, they were determined to unite and pursue a struggle for freedom and democracy and human dignity.

One-hundred-and-fourteen years later, South Africa faces strong domestic and global headwinds.

Like generations before us, we must show the same resolve and courage to solve the current economic, social and political challenges facing our people and country.

This requires both urgency and discipline in implementing the course of action and the six tasks we defined for ourselves and the nation.

We cannot accept dysfunctional, apathetic, uncaring local government.

We cannot accept an economy that only works for the few.

We therefore declare 2026 as the YEAR OF DECISIVE ACTION TO FIX LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND TRANSFORM THE ECONOMY.

May God protect our people.

Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso.

God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa.

Mudzimu thatutshedza Afurika. Hosi katekisa Afrika.



AWARDS

The ANC annually recognises organisational performance through Branch Awards, with vibrant activist branches as key to ANC renewal.

Sol Plaatje Award

The Sol Plaatje Award for **Best Performing ANC Branch** recognises ANC branches that demonstrate active engagements with communities and strong organisational functionality, consistent with the role of the branch as the basic unit of the movement. In 2025, the criteria also included a particular focus on proactive intervening in service delivery issues and that branch members must have done the ANC Foundation Course.

The winners for 2025 are:

In first place, the Kwaito Leope Branch, Ward 4, Elias Motsoaledi Municipality, Sekhukhune, Limpopo.

In second place, the Pixley ka Seme Branch, Ward 60, Johannesburg, Gauteng.

In third place, the OR Tambo Branch, Ward 133, Johannesburg, Gauteng.

Charlotte Maxeke Award

The Charlotte Maxeke Award for **Best Performing ANC Women's League Branch** recognises ANCWL branches that demonstrate consistent political work, organisational functionality, advocacy on women's issues, and active engagement with communities, in line with the ANCWL's constitutional mandate and the broader objectives of the ANC. In 2025, ANCWL mobilisation, advocacy and public education on GBVF remained a key focus area.



The winners for 2025 are:

In first place, the MK Setumo ANCWL Branch, Ward 4, Mangaung, Free State.

In second place, the Vuyani Mabaxa ANCWL Branch, Ward 27, Johannesburg, Gauteng.

In third place, the Trevor Vilakazi ANCWL Branch, Ward 93, Dullah Omar Region, Western Cape.

Anton Lembede Award

The Anton Lembede Award for **Best Performing ANC Youth League Branch** recognises outstanding organisational and political work by branches of the ANCYL. The award seeks to acknowledge ANCYL branches that demonstrate consistent youth mobilisation, advocacy on youth issues, organisational functionality, political education and active participation in community and electoral work.

The winners for 2025 are:

In first place, the ANCYL Branch, Ward 38, Madibeng, Bojanala, North West.

In second place, the ANCYL Branch, Ward 6, Mangaung, Free State.

In third place, ANCYL Branch, Ward 25, Polokwane, Limpopo.

ZK Matthews Award

The ZK Matthews for **Best performing ANC Local Council Caucus**, based on performance on governance, institutional stability, service delivery and financial management.

The winners for 2025 are:



In first place, the ANC Caucus of the Nkangala District Municipality in Mpumalanga, in recognition of good performance, receiving an unqualified audit outcome with no findings, with effective internal controls, full utilisation of its infrastructure and other grants, to aid effective service delivery.

In second place, the ANC Caucus of the OR Tambo District Municipality, which in addition to performance on the general criteria, is also a pioneer of the District Development Model.

ANNIVERSARIES

We draw lessons and inspiration from a number of significant anniversaries taking place this year.

All of these underscore the non-racial and non-sexist character of the ANC, the Alliance and the broader Mass Democratic Movement and our commitment to remain steadfast in pursuit of the ideals of the National Democratic Revolution as expressed in the Freedom Charter and the Constitution of the Republic.

During 2026, we will celebrate the centenary of the births of:

- Isithwalandwe-Seaparankoe Joe Slovo (23 May 1926 – 6 January 1995)
- Max Coleman (21 June 1926 – 16 January 2022)
- Viola Hashe (1926–1977)
- Ethel de Keyser (4 November 1926 – 16 July 2004)
- Harold Wolpe (14 January 1926 – 19 January 1996)
- Maqashu Mdinci (2 February 1926 – November 2013)
- Kesval “Kay” Moonsamy (5 July 1926 – 21 June 2017)
- Maniben Sita (24 December 1926 – 7 July 2021)

We will commemorate the following anniversaries:

75 years since coloured voters were removed from the common voters' roll and were placed on a separate list in 1956. They became



entitled to vote for a small number of white Members of Parliament to represent their interests.

75 years since the Suppression of Communism Act was passed on 18 June 1951 to silence our ally, the then Communist Party of South Africa.

70 years since the Women's March to the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956 brought together 20,000 women from all national groups in united action under the banner of the Federation of South African Women to protest against the issuing of passes to African women. They presented a petition which proclaimed that, *"An insult to African women is an insult to all women"* and that *"We shall not rest until we have won for our children their fundamental rights of freedom, justice and security"*.

70 years since the start of the 1956 Treason Trial that attempted to crush legal opposition to apartheid by the Congress Alliance, which led to the acquittal of all accused by 29 March 1961.

65 years since the formation of the Peoples' Army, uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) on 16 December 1961, proclaiming that: *"The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight."*

65 years since the All-In African Conference on 25-26 March 1961 called for a national convention of elected representatives of all adult men and women, without regard to race, colour or creed, to prepare a non-racial democratic constitution.

65 years since the National Party government, led by Hendrik Verwoerd, declared South Africa as a white Republic on 31 May 1961 following an all-white referendum. In response Nelson Mandela stated that: *"No constitution or form of Government decided without the participation of the African people who form an absolute majority of the population can enjoy moral validity or merit support either within South Africa or beyond its borders."*



January 8th Statement 2026

65 years since ANC President Chief Albert Luthuli received the Nobel Peace Prize in December 1961. In his acceptance lecture he stated: *“...our cause is the cause of the liberation of people who are denied freedom. Only on this basis can the peace of Africa and the world be firmly founded. Our cause is the cause of equality between nations and peoples. Only thus can the brotherhood of man be firmly established.”*

55 years since Isithwalandwe-Seaparankoe Ahmed Timol was brutally killed by the apartheid Security Police on 27 October 1971 by being thrown from the tenth floor of John Vorster Square.

50 years since the 16 June 1976 student uprising that started in Soweto and spread across the country.

45 years since the Matola Massacre on 30 January 1981 in which the apartheid regime attacked houses used by the ANC in Matola, Maputo, killing twelve ANC members and one Mozambican national.

45 years since MK Special Operations attacked the SADF Military Headquarters at Voortrekkerhoogte on 12 August 1981 exemplifying the overall escalation of coordinated political and military struggle against apartheid.

45 years since the brutal assassination of ANC member and human rights lawyer Griffiths Mxenge on 19 November 1981. Victoria Mxenge, his wife, a nurse turned lawyer, maintained their legal practice until she too was assassinated on 1 August 1985.

35 years since the Sebokeng Massacre on the night of 12 January 1991, when more than 30 people were killed while attending an all-night vigil for ANCYL leader Chris Nangalembe.

35 years since the ANC's 48th National Conference held on 2-7 July 1991 in Durban, the first in the country since its banning in 1960, under the theme: *“People’s Power for a Democratic Future”*.

35 years since the signing of the National Peace Accord on 14 September 1991 to end political violence by setting up national, regional and local peace committees.

35 years since the formation of the Patriotic Front on 25-27 October 1991, bringing together 92 organisations in response to the call in the January 8 Statement of that year that: *“...we have to reach out to other organisations that pursue goals that are similar to ours, as well as those that are capable of moving towards and accepting these positions, to form a patriotic front for a democratic South Africa.”*

35 years since the first plenary session of the Conference for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) took place on 20-21 of December 1991 at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park.

30 years since the adoption of Constitution of the Republic of South Africa on 8 May 1996, at which the Chairperson of the Constitutional Assembly, President Cyril Ramaphosa, said: *“This constitution, with its Bill of Rights, is the mirror of South African society. It reflects both the history from which we have emerged, and the values we now cherish – human dignity, equality and freedom. Through this constitution, we hope to transform our society from one that is based on injustice and strife to one based on justice and peace.”*

30 years since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu started its hearings on 15 April 1996 to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.

25 years since the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance was held in August and September 2001 in Durban. In opening the conference President Thabo Mbeki urged that: *“It must convey a message of hope to the peoples of the world that, together, we are resolved to work hard for peace everywhere on our universe, so that the doors open everywhere for the fullest and all-round development of all human beings in conditions of freedom, safety and security.”*



TRIBUTES

During 2025 we dipped our revolutionary banner in honour of the memory of Comrades:

Former Deputy President David Dabede Mabuza, Isithwalandwe-Seaparankoe Getrude Shope, Former President Sam Nujoma of Swapo and Namibia, Former President of Vietnam Truong Tan Sang, Former Secretary General of Frelimo Feliciano Gundana, Former Prime Minister of Angola Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos, Former US Congressperson Charles B Rangel, Professor Ngugī wa Thiong'o, His Holiness Pope Francis, Evelyn Nompumelelo Lubidla, Paul Zitha, Yusuf Bhamjee, Celia Ntombenhle Khuzwayo, Gen Keith Mokoape, Winnie Khumalo, Bruce Kannemeyer, Sylvia Stevens-Maziya, Anastacia Thula, Ian Mzoxolo Nonkumbi, Paddy Harper, Philadelphia Boitumelo Phatudi, Mark Weinberg, Thami Ncokwane, Noxolo May-Kgasi, Vusi Banda, Shakes Nunu Shabiso, Mark Shinners, Don Mlangeni Nawa, Dennis Neer, AL Motete, Benny Itume-leng Kotsoane, Manana Nakasi, Sean Dinat, Amb Zolani Mtshotshisa, Boitumelo Plaatje, Mahloko Taleng, Simon Tex Rantao, Leah Madalane, Amb Super Moloi, Mohammed Iqbal Kader, Lungi Mnganga-Gcabashe, Gen Manoko Nchwe, Rev Dr Tshenuwani Fari-sani, Gen Andre Lincoln, Rashid Lombard, Dr Nondumiso Maphazi, Aurelia Nomazotsho Gqabi, Adolphus Boy Mvemve, Louis Moholo-Moholo, Feya Faku, Theresa Solomon, Siviwe "Svig" Mkontwana, Butiki Johnny Tsotetsi, Brenda Dammie, Fred Mokoko, Nomazwe Ntlokwana, Tessa Marcus, Ashwin Trikamjee, Ntwana Yaka, Themba "Mbem" Mabuza, Mary Turok, Mervyn Swarts, Lindiwe Poswa, Mark Mathye, Mfanelo Ronnie Matshaya, Phethedi Shadrack Moetanalo, Mninwa MJ Mahlangu, Mathilda Bains, Dikgang Uhuru Moiloa, Ntokozo "Proletariat" Mhlungu, Crystal Dicks, Amb Nathi Mthethwa, Rev Mosola Joseph "Moruti" Maphatsoe, Ntombazana Botha, Franklin Sonn, Sunny Singh, Promise Sibongile Khumalo, Stephen "Diba"



Dyabooi, Robert Tsikwe, Colleen Lombard, Magashe Titus Mafolo, Gen Tamsanqa “Teddy” Nqaphayi (Peter Mfene), Dr Renee Thompson, Prof Renfrew Christie, Brian Hlongwa, Wilson Macozana (Cde Phiri) and Dikeledi Magadzi.

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