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STATEMENT OF THE NEC OF THE ANC ON THE OCCASION OF 8TH JANUARY, 1985

Compatriots,

A New Year has begun, bringing with it fresh hopes and new challenges*

I am sure that I express our collective conviction when I say that during this decade each New Year brings us closer to our cherished goal - the total liberation of our country*

The bells that rang in the New Year were, for us, a call to battle, summoning us to ever greater involvement and persistence in the struggle for democratic change. We can and we will meet the new challenges,

successfully, because we are committed to-.make the necessary sacrifices

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in the; struggle to liberate ourselves* The hopes we nurture are based on our unflinching commitment to persevere until victory is ours*

Today, January 8th 1985, we observe and celebrate 73 years of the African National Congress* We mark this day with our heads held high because, in the year that has passed, once^ more, we have demonstrated that we as a people will not be deflected from our goal* V/e have grown in numbers and in influence and the objective towards which so many generations of our people have striven is now clearly visible on the horizon.

During this decade of the eighties, our people are inscribing into the book of the history of humanity a glowing new chapter - the final collapse

of the epoch of colonial and white minority domination. On behalf of the National Executive Committee and the entire membership of the African National Congress, we extend to you, compatriots, our best wishes for the greatest succession our common endeavours f*or the current year*

It is five years since we rallied our people around the demands of the Freedom Charter during 1980, the Year of the Charter* This year, as we

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mark the 30th anniversary of that historic document, we can with confidence say that all true South African patriots have adopted the Freedom Charter as the embodiment of our deepest aspirations and the blue print for a new South Africa,

1954 how we take bold steps forward on the road to freedom. The path we have traversed was fraught with numerous dangers and unknown hazards. But despite these, it is clear as we come to the end of 1954 - the Year of the Women, that we have succeeded in shifting the balance of power within our country in favour of the forces fighting for national liberation. and

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genuine peace in southern Africa through persistent collective labour

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and dedication we have bargained through pre-requisites for a mighty people's movement against the racist monstrosity. As we said last year, it is in attack that we shall find victory.

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By attacking, we defeated the efforts of the racist regime to mobilise the Coloured and Indian sections of the black population into acceptance

of the apartheid constitutional

By attacking, we frustrated the regime's attempts to contain the militant democratic trade union movement and transform it into a tame shadow that accords with the regime's wishes.

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By attacking, we strove to the fig-leaf of respectability dummy

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institutions this year has imposed on us in the urban areas*

â- 'These were victories of great importance for the further advance of our struggle. They served to raise the degree of isolation of the oppressive regime and strengthened the ranks of the forces committed to the victory of the democratic revolution in our country*'

By their refusal to be bullied into acceptance of the enemy's schemes the

Coloured and Indian people demonstrated in practice their determination to fight side by side and in unity with the African majority for a common victory against a common enemy. By boycotting the tri-racial elections of August, the Coloured and Indian people were asserting the truth that

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no section of the black people can be free while another is oppressed*

The regime reacted to this with characteristic arrogance and its response constitutes a classic example of the anti-popular nature of; all the white minority; regimes which have held power since 1910. /Commenting on the abysmally low polls of 10 to 20 cent, In^ernal/^M"fairs Minister P.W. de Kler)Â£ saidNit was*

"High enptfgli to say that dcmopfacy \as been given a cnfrcfice" and was "a good #6ough basisyon which continue.Â®

TheBO"" are the podple we are ^sked to accept in good faith thd^ they wa nt to change Apartheid for the better.

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The victory in August expressed our common recognition that apartheid cannot be reformed. It was a denunciation of Botha's "reform" programm e as a deceitful sham. It placed before the whole country the revolution-ary perspective of the seizure of power by the people and the building of a new society in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

The white minority regime lives in dread of the organised power of the â€¢ Ctrl ir

black working class of country. That is why, in the past;as in the present, it has imprisoned, banned, banished and even assassinated

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leaders and activists of SACTU, the. South African Congress- of Trade Unieae. (^1985 is the 30th anniversary of the founding of^ACTUi We take this opportunity to salute the workers of our country^for their role in it of militant democratic trade sustainl&a^ and ke alive oi

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unionism aoi embodied in SACTU the teeth of the most vicious racist

During 1984* in addition to the (magnificent) shop-floor struggles waged by the Hfeaiw workers, we sawKfor the first time^in 38 years, the black mineworkers join in a coordinated national offensive in this most sensitive sector of the South African economy. Basing ourselves on the gains made, we must ensure that the mining industry will never be the same again. In future, the objective we must aim for, is that, wherever a struggle erupts, be it in a mine or a factory, a farm or a building side, a shop or a service centre, we must emerge from suoh struggles with a

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stronger workers' organisation, a higher level of political consciousness and a greater determination to fight on as a united force, whatever the cost to ourselves as individuals#

Towards the end of last year, in November, (the magnificent stay-at-home) in the Transvaal convincingly demonstrated the power (of) the organised working class can wield in the struggle for liberation is the "regime's fear of the central role of the organised and conscious workers that has occasioned their attacks on the workers' organisations#

Alarmed by the success of the workers in paralysing industry and commerce in an area that is the economic heartland of South Africa, the capitalist owners of property were compelled to speak out# In an unprecedented move, the organisations of the leading capitalists drew the attention of the ruling group to the fact that all was not well and that the continued use of the old methods of repression would only serve to inspire the black workers to intensify their offensive.

We, the people, by our massive united action, are forcing the capitalists in South Africa to see us not as mere instruments of labour, to be 'bought and discarded at will, but as human beings with human feelings and human needs,

The magnificent two-day stay-away in November, demonstrated that joint action is the indispensable basis for organisational and political unity# More importantly, unity of views can be achieved more easily through joint struggle against the racist enemy,

The stay-at-home, in fact, dealt a deadly blow to a negative tendency that had emerged within the democratic movement# We refer to the tendency which had set out to detach the organised working class from the political struggle for people's power#

Compatriots, Comrades, and Friends,

We have just gone through what was definitely one of the most trying periods in the life of our movement and struggle. We have survived one of the most lethal attacks on our movement, whose cunning and cruelty would have overcome a weaker people with less resolve. The courage of our leadership and the tenacious bravery of our people during the

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difficult days of: 1984 is what enabled us-, to leave Ft:-ppssi;J), IQ defeat
t â€€. into a resounding victory that has . inspired our allies and friends to greater supportive action and solidarity*

The so-called peace Accords the Pretoria regime has managed to impose on the neighbouring states were conceived as a diabolic scheme to paralyse and cripple the African National Congress*

Weakened by the legacy of colonialism, three successive years of drought and the destabilising acts of racist-backed terrorism, these states became easy victims to Pretoria's blackmail*

This plot, jointly hatched between Pretoria and its allies in the US and Western Europe, sought to drive a wedge between ourselves and the peoples of southern Africa by offering them peace in return for a renunciation of the African National Congress*

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The principled stand taken by the Frontline States, in opposition to every conceivable inducement, was a (magnificent demonstration of the unity of the region in particular against the aggressive designs of apartheid
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The kingdom of Lesotho, a. Singularly courageous country and people, completely surrounded by territory controlled by the racists, has stood up (as few countries could) to the bullying* and arm-twisting of Pretoria and international imperialism* This is an example that does the peoples of Africa credit and is worthy of emulation both within the region and beyond

Botha's European trip, planned as a triumphal tour of the capitals of western Europe to sell the "new image" of a changing South Africa, was transformed into a surreptitious fly-by-night operation, during which even his most warmly disposed interlocutors had to adopt a stance critical of racism and apartheid*

It is clear that the racist regime has signally failed to drive the ANC out of this region of Africa. Instead, twice during the past year the Frontline States have met and reaffirmed their support for ANC and SWAPO and our common struggle against the apartheid regime* These positions were endorsed and upheld by the 20th summit of the OAU. Our continent

South Africa remains a rich country endowed with enormous mineral, land, industrial and human resources sufficient to maintain our entire population at moderately comfortable standards of living. Yet we continue to have, side by side, people living in royal luxury and abject poverty*

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The fact is that South African economy has been built on the super-exploitation

of black labour*

The crisis facing South African economy today is really

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the crisis caused by the refusal of the ruling capitalist class to reduce their high rates of profit in the face of rising demands by the black workers for equal opportunities and equitable remuneration for their labour*

- a huge foreign debt and negative balance of payment

- the international recession, etc.

However the two major factors contributing to the crisis stem from the system of Apartheid. These are the government overspending on Apartheid

resultant struggles of the black working masses*

Compatriots,

We stand at the threshold of the second half of the 1980s* When we cast our minds back to the year of the Charter, 1980, and the subsequent years

the one feature that stands out is the ever-expanding and visible role of the masses of our people in the making of this history. As we stand at the beginning of this second half of the Decade of Liberation, it is necessary that we examine not only our striking power, but, even more importantly in which direction to strike and how to deliver the blow*

It is true that certain economic factors have contributed to the present crisis

- the fall in the gold price

- the fall in the international value

administrative institutions (including the army and police) and the

Our struggle consists of four interpenetrating and mutually reinforcing elements* These are first, the vanguard role of the underground structure of the ANC; second, the united mass political action of the people; third, the armed offensive spearheaded by Umkhonto We Sizwe; and fourth, the international campaign to isolate the apartheid regime while winning world-wide moral, political and material support for the struggle. However it is organised strength of the ANC inside our country and amongst

This year we make a special call to all the democratic and patriotic forces of our country to pay special attention to the task, of strengthening our forces of struggle and ensuring the active presence of dedicated militants everywhere in the country.

Our major task remains that of making South Africa ungovernable. In order to fulfil this task, we need to ensure that we have activists ready, to mobilise our people in whatever sphere of our lives that is affected by the evil Apartheid system - the political, economic, socio-cultural and the spiritual.

We take pride in the fact that the international conscience, in the face of the Nobel Peace Committee has seen 'fit to award to a black South African - Bishop Desmond Tutu, the Nobel Peace Prize, This is the second instance that our people have been given this honour within 23 years.

The first South African was our beloved Chief Albert Luthuli*

There is no doubt that this is a tribute to our self-less dedication and resistance to one of the most cruel and inhuman systems the world has ever known. The award should be an inspiration to all our religious communities to get the heresy of Apartheid expunged from the statute books and from our lives, r

A special responsibility devolves on our youth during 1985* By its decision to observe the International Year of Youth, the racist regime

has thrown down the gauntlet to the youth of our country. Among the numerous crimes this regime has committed and continues to commit against

the mass of our people shall determine the pace of our forward march

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towards the armed seizure of power,

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The level of this challenge to the operation of the apartheid system had reached such heights, such intensity, in Johannesburg, and various other localities throughout our country, that the regime felt compelled to deploy, for the first time since 1961, thousands of regular troops to crush the people's resistance*

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Our greatest tribute goes to the millions of people involved in the ever-expanding work within the world-wide anti-apartheid movement. They constitute the solid base of support for our struggle internationally. It is through their daily, sometimes unknown efforts that governments and people are kept alive and mobilised in action against the numerous ploys of the South African racists to white-wash Apartheid.

We salute these unsung heroes working for the cause of a peaceful world

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and closer fellowship of the human race.