



1993 VOTES FOR ALL!

STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE ON THE OCCASION OF
THE 81ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
JANUARY 8, 1993



PEACE, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY!



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Fellow South Africans, Comrades and Compatriots,

Today, January 8th, marks the 81st anniversary of the African National Congress.

We observe this important date at a moment when our country stands at its gateway to the future.

1993 is destined to be the year when we bring to an end the exclusive exercise of political power by the white minority. At last, we shall, together, set ourselves on the path to democratic rule.

This historic moment in the transition to people's power will express itself through a general election which must be held before the end of 1993.

The elections will be the first in our country when all the people, black and white, the privileged and the deprived, will vote together as equals in an undivided South Africa. As we move into this phase let us ensure that this vote leads to the systematic empowerment of all and especially South African women.

SOVEREIGN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Through the exercise of this inalienable right of all our people to determine their future, will be born a sovereign Constituent Assembly which will also function as a democratic and non-racial Interim Parliament and an Interim Government of National Unity, representative of and accountable to the people as a whole. Through this democratic vote the people shall determine the shape of our country for decades to come.

It is within our power, as a country and a nation, to secure this year a decisive victory which will place us on the road to resolving the centuries-old struggle between brutal oppression and exploitation on one hand, and the quest for genuine emancipation of all our people, on the other.



This history of conflict created a deeply divided country. As we strive to create the new, we will have to start from the heritage of a society torn apart and driven by hatred and division; a society which imprisoned both the oppressed and the oppressor.

The future cannot be built by ignoring or denying the past. Nor can there be reconciliation without acknowledgement by the architects of apartheid and by all other South Africans of the wrongs they have committed.

Those who usurped power in our country did everything possible to divide our society so that they could continue to rule.

They used their deadly instruments which included racism, tribalism, ethnicity, sexism, corruption in all its forms and a particular and sectarian theological outlook – all of which sought to rob our people of the bond which derives from the understanding that all human beings are equal.

Today all of us, both culprit and victim, are reaping the whirlwind of the destructive seeds Apartheid sowed.

DAY OF RECKONING

Those South Africans who have had the wisdom to stop and think have always known that the day of reckoning would come. They recognised that in the end many of our people would coalesce into distinct, belligerent camps.

We, for our part, as an organisation have known that there could be no peace among the people until all of us acknowledge that we are one people who share a common patriotism and a common destiny.

It is for these reasons that at its inception in 1912 the ANC spoke out against “the demon of tribalism”. It is for these reasons that, in actual struggle, we constantly sought to forge the unity of the oppressed and exploited.

To secure genuine emancipation we struggled to ensure that the organisations of the oppressed, including the ANC, should be representative of all the people of our country, including those in the white



community.

Today we are proud to see the concept and practice of non-racialism increasingly accepted as the perspective of most political formations of our country. We are inspired by the widespread acceptance of the mutually dependent principles of democracy, equality, justice, peace and reconciliation.

When the people of our country stated in the Freedom Charter in 1955 that: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it black and white..." they summed up our common yearning for democracy, non-racialism and national unity.

VISION OF THE FUTURE

In the Freedom Charter our people put together a vision of the future based on prosperity for all. The Charter expresses a goal which the ANC and all other democrats in our country have been striving for in opposition to the policies of successive apartheid regimes.

All sectors of our society yearn for the urgent realisation of a system in which they can realise their full potential.

It is crucial that workers and the rural masses, and particularly the unemployed youth, continue to strive for better conditions, jobs and land in the context of a growing economy. Families have all reason to unite in the search for affordable prices on shop shelves.

Students, teachers and parents deserve a better deal in education, a system based on non-racial and democratic principles – not on the wealth they command. A better health system which caters for all is not a privilege, but a right which must be guaranteed. It is abominable that senior citizens should continue to be subjected to racial discrimination and inhuman treatment.

Professionals merit an environment in which they can exercise their creativity without the confining ideology of racism. Business-people deserve secure investments in conditions of social harmony.

All communities have a right to housing and living conditions free of crime and social disintegration.



All South Africans, be they African Coloured, Indian or White – men and women, young and old – deserve a better deal. They deserve lasting security and a stable environment. And the problems of the past and the present cannot be resolved by means of modified apartheid, no matter how sweet-sounding the phrases of representatives of this heinous system.

The time has come to translate this vision into reality as a united people, through genuine democracy, justice and good government.

As we strive to achieve these objectives, we must also break down and abolish the divisions and antagonisms which were used to deny all our people democracy, peace and prosperity. This year must therefore be the year which opens up ever-widening scope for democratic participation and empowerment.

BUILDING A NATION

We are in the midst of the process of building a nation. To achieve this we must ensure that the diversity of cultures, languages and religions of our people flourish. Overcoming the divisive heritage of the past will require a conscious effort to promote institutions and practices which will – formally and informally – create the conditions in which we all learn to treat our languages, cultures and religions with equal respect and dignity based on a common patriotism.

In this nation-building effort the ANC also recognises that we shall have to make provision which will restore to a place of dignity and respect the institution of chieftainship. Our traditional leaders were reduced to the status of paid servants of the apartheid state and cut off from the service of the people. But this can only be achieved if they break with the apartheid past. In this way, they will be able to play a constructive role in enhancing the unity of our people and help restore themselves to the respect they deserve.

National unity, non-racialism and a common patriotism are the cement which will bind a nation at peace with itself and in harmony with the natural world we inhabit.

Events since early 1990 have made the country swing between moments of high expectations and of despair. There have been those



who have sought to postpone and delay the process of transition.

Today all South Africans realise that we need to move forward decisively and with the utmost speed. Each day that passes is a day of deprivation, of hunger, of rising unemployment, of violence, increasing crime and insecurity for all.

The transition to democracy is the key to resolving the deep-seated social and economic crisis.

We are under no illusion that this transition to democracy will be plain sailing. We are faced with a regime which seeks to preserve its privileges and assure its power. It has often failed to adhere to agreements it has reached with the ANC.

It is a regime which still refuses to acknowledge the crime of apartheid. Even when the De Klerk regime has been forced to acknowledge that senior SADF officers are involved in the violence and in efforts to destabilise the negotiation process and the ANC, it continues to deny that there is a Third Force. It persists in shrouding in secrecy the corruption and the role of its security forces.

The only way to secure the future is for the De Klerk regime to come clean and out into the open. Along this path, we shall ensure that the defence of the country is placed correctly into the hands of the people. They have fashioned the gains we have registered. They are the defenders of the progress we have made. They are the force who will carry our country into the future.

KEY STEPS IN 1993

Our optimism for 1993 rests on the fact that mass action, public exposures, international pressure and the consistent espousal of democratic rule are the basis for the advances that we have been making. Through these instruments we must ensure that the regime abandons its bankrupt strategy of negotiating with whilst simultaneously seeking to undermine the ANC.

The key steps that have to be taken during this year are:

- Resumption of multilateral talks in CODESA.
- Ensuring a climate of free political activity in all parts of our coun-



- try.
- Establishment of the Transitional Executive Council and its sub-structures as well as an Independent Elections Commission and Independent Media Commission so as to ensure free and fair elections.
 - Elections for a Constituent Assembly and an Interim Government of National Unity before the end of 1993.
 - Reincorporation of the so-called independent bantustans.

The challenge facing the ANC is two-fold

On the one hand, we have to pursue the struggle strenuously on all fronts to ensure that negotiations are successfully concluded to bring about democratic rule. On the other hand, we need to face the challenge of forthcoming Constituent Assembly elections and prepare ourselves to govern.

The policy conference of the ANC, through a thoroughgoing process of discussions and debate both inside the ANC and in the broader public arena provided us with the framework of policies for a truly democratic, humane and just society. We need to carry this to all our formations which must ensure that it becomes the property of the people as a whole. This must involve reinvigorating and expanding the organisation of the ANC at regional and local levels and its links with the people.

The momentum for change is gathering force. We must make it unstoppable.

There are those political formations which fear change and are totally opposed to democratic elections. They are products of apartheid thinking. They fear the will of the people. They cling to ethnic fiefdoms and racism. But, they are part of a dying order.

Unless they are able to place the national interest above their party political and personal agendas they will confine themselves to the role of spoilers and will be judged accordingly.

The ANC maintains that the negotiations process should be as inclusive as possible. Our call to all formations to join Codesa is open-ended. But, we insist that no one should be allowed to hold the transi-



tion to democracy to ransom.

The elections cannot be delayed beyond 1993

CLIMATE OF PEACE

To arrive at this point we have to address two related questions effectively. These are curbing the violence that continues to blight our country and the creation of a climate conducive to free political activity.

The ANC stands for peace – To end the violence, during the course of 1992, the ANC has:

- called for an urgent meeting of all signatories to the National Peace Accord to strengthen the accord and publicly renew their joint commitment to peace;
- secured international involvement, through the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity and the Commonwealth, which has resulted in the stationing of monitors in South Africa;
- actively engaged in local and national peace initiatives as part of a determined effort to bring people together at grassroots level.

Yet the carnage continues

PEACE STRUCTURES

The terrorism, destabilisation and repression that emanates from within the security forces, and State agencies, including the various Administrations in different parts of South Africa, must be rooted out without any equivocation and delay.

Free political activity and a culture of political tolerance must be created. The violent conflict between members of different political organisations must be brought to an end.

The National Peace Accord must be fully implemented and strengthened. Codesa agreed that all armed formations and police forces be placed under the control of a statutory Transitional Executive Council. This must be effected as soon as this Council is established. This will lay the basis for the creation of a truly representative South African army in which Umkhonto weSizwe shall have a crucial role to play.

No more lives must be lost! Let us develop the most powerful public



campaign for peace that our country has ever seen! Such a campaign should unite all our people in action, regardless of race, gender, class, political affiliation, age, religion or geographic location. This would be the best way to pay tribute to thousands who lost their lives in the carnage ravaging our country.

We count on the international community to increase its presence and to play an even more vigorous role in its intervention for peace. The stationing of international monitors has been an important achievement of our movement. It has reinforced the efforts of our people against those who have no regard for human life. It has strengthened the forces for democracy and peace in our country.

In this regard, we would like to pay tribute to the OAU for responding to the appeal of the ANC and ensuring that the intervention of the United Nations and other international bodies became possible.

FREE POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Our country cries out for the creation of space to enable people to associate without let or hindrance; to propagate and discuss views without fear or favour; to fashion a vision of our country through the process of free and energetic debate.

Those who are committed to democracy and peace cannot allow a situation to persist whereby anybody, whoever they might be, denies the people their right to a climate conducive to free political activity.

In all parts of the country, including the so-called homelands, whether "independent" or not, all organisations and individuals must enjoy the same rights and the same opportunities to organise, to assemble and to propagate their views.

A DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION

As soon as it is elected, the Constituent Assembly will commence its work of drafting and adopting the new constitution for which millions of our people are waiting. We are committed to ensuring that this constitution, the supreme law of the land, enshrines and expresses the perspective contained in the Codesa Declaration of Intent of multi-party democracy in a united, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa.



A critical element of this constitution must be an entrenched and enforceable Bill of Rights which would protect fundamental human rights and limit the power of any parliament to take away these rights.

This will also require that the judiciary be reconstituted to ensure that it is independent, non-racial and non-sexist and therefore capable of enjoying the support and trust of all South Africans.

Provision will have to be made to ensure that the entire system of the administration of justice is not subject to political manipulation. In this way it will become possible to guarantee the application of the two fundamental principles of the rule of, and equality before, the law.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Our perspectives are governed by the ideal expressed in the Freedom Charter: The people shall govern! We are therefore determined to ensure that government is as close to the people as possible.

Our constitutional proposals, therefore, include the essential element that, in addition to effective central government, manifesting the reality of one South African nation, there should also be strong, meaningful and representative regional and local government capable of expressing the will of the people in the conduct of their daily lives.

Attachment to labels, such as “federalism”, will not take the discussion anywhere – least of all if the insertion of such concepts is aimed at emasculating central government, seeking to maintain the status quo of a South Africa fragmented into racial and ethnic compartments and promoting the partisan interests of particular political organisations.

UNITY OF PATRIOTS

The constructing of a constitutional framework for a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist society should unite all genuine democratic forces in our country, regardless of other differences that they otherwise might have.

Therefore we believe that it will be one of our central tasks during this year to enhance the degree of unity and raise the level of united action of these forces in the pursuit of common goals.



Central to this exercise is the urgent need to build the organisation of the ANC at every level. We dare not rest on our record of struggle which has brought our country to this crucial moment. We must take our policies to the grassroots, organise our people and show the way forward in all areas of life. This is the only way to ensure that they reaffirm, through the vote, that the ANC represents their true aspirations.

Every effort has to be made to strengthen the ANC/SACP/COSATU alliance so that we carry the country to effective democracy. In the Campaign for Peace and Democracy during 1992, our Alliance reached new heights and demonstrated its immense capacity to mobilise and organise the people. Alliance structures at the local and grassroots levels were created. These functioned with single-minded purpose and provided the critical element which helped remove blockages in negotiations and ensured forward movement.

The Patriotic Front, made up of both political formations and organisations of civil society, and representative of the overwhelming majority of the citizens of our country, is a vital instrument for the achievement of these objectives.

TASKS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT

What are the tasks of the Patriotic Front during this historic year? Put simply and directly, they are:

- to ensure the successful conclusion of the negotiations taking place in Codesa;
- to develop common positions with regard to the fundamental constitutional positions that will be put to the electorate at large and to the Constituent Assembly. These would include provisions relating to workers', women's and children's rights as well as the role of civil society and the place of traditional institutions of government;
- to develop common positions relating to the principal elements of the policies that should be implemented when the Interim Government of National Unity is established;
- to engage the general public in discussion of these constitutional and governmental policy positions, so as to develop a national consensus around the key pillars of the process of transformation;
- to mobilise the nation as a whole to join in the struggle to curb and end the violence;



- to mobilise the nation as a whole to act together to ensure the existence of a climate conducive to free political activity in all parts of our country;
- to elaborate and implement a programme of work directed at voter education and ensuring that the people exercise their hard-won democratic right to vote; and
- to win these voters over to support the policies put forward by the ANC and its allies.

Together, at national, regional and local levels, let us speak with one voice, explaining honestly what we want for our country and what we want its future to be. At the same time, let us act as a united force for peace, tolerance and a new life of freedom and prosperity for all South Africans.

These objectives must instruct the conduct of all our members and formations, prohibiting any activity on our part which leads to violence, political intolerance and provides excuses for those who wish to delay the process of democratic transformation.

CHANGE CANNOT BE STOPPED

We appeal to all those of our compatriots who fear the prospect of democratic change. What they should fear are the consequences of the absence of change.

Any continuation of the past would mean that our country sinks further, with all its people, into the depths of a general crisis which would benefit no one and from which it would be impossible to extricate itself in the foreseeable future. Such a disaster we must avoid at all costs.

Those who entertain the delusion that the process of change can be stopped or postponed through violence and subversion should abandon this hopeless project.

Similarly, no one who claims to uphold the true interests of the freedom of our people, should act in a way that enhances the role of those who want to plunge our country into race conflict and civil war.

None, including those within the security forces and the white right,



should take it upon themselves to create a situation in which more lives will be lost and more blood shed, as a result of a vain effort to defend the ultimately indefensible.

It is clear that, during this year, we shall also see the establishment of the multi-party Transitional Executive Council, with its substructures to be followed by an elected Interim Government of National Unity. It is therefore important that we give attention to the development of governmental programmes to be implemented during these phases.

These changes will, among other things, bring more people into public administration, to create more representative and therefore legitimate structures of government.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE

The movement away from almost 45 years of exclusive rule and domination by the National Party, will create the possibility for our country to begin to address the fundamental question of improving the quality of life of all citizens. The desperate and worsening situation faced by millions of our people, of unemployment, landlessness, homelessness, hunger, the diseases of poverty, of a disastrous educational system, and so on, cannot be allowed to continue.

We cannot hold out the false promise that a solution to these problems can be found overnight. Yet a beginning has to be made, and made soon.

This will entail many things, among them measures aimed at ensuring sustained economic growth, a more equitable distribution of wealth, and of income and opportunity especially with regard to the women of our country, the rationalisation and restructuring of state expenditure, the elimination of corruption in the public sector and an appeal to the international community to come to our aid.

Any political arrangements enabling democratic rule will be nullified if we do not ensure a stable and growing economy. Both the workers of our country and business have a crucial and decisive role to play in this regard.

It is crucial that the people should not only get the vote, but also begin to see a new future dawn with regard to jobs, land, food, housing,



health and education. Without this, the people cannot even begin to regain their dignity as human beings. Without this, we cannot say we have begun to dismantle the criminal and destructive system of apartheid.

As we progress towards the democratic settlement, more windows to the world will open for our country and people. We should value and nurture this development. The critical element with regard to ending South Africa's isolation will not be statements made by this or the other politician, but the actual movement forward towards the democratisation of our country.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

The world looks to us, who know the true meaning of racism and racial oppression, to create a political and social order which will make a critical contribution to the worldwide struggle against racism.

All humanity is ready and willing to assist us achieve this result which has universal implications. This is an opportunity we dare not allow anyone to frustrate simply because they refuse to break with the past.

We appeal to the international community and the solidarity movement with its proud history of anti-apartheid activity to help us ensure that the ideal of democracy is realised in South Africa. At this decisive moment their support is more crucial than ever before.

As part of the process of our entry into the world we shall have to do everything in our power to help ensure that Southern Africa is a region of democracy, peace, stability, mutually advantageous co-operation and prosperity.

We support the peace processes in Angola and Mozambique aimed at attaining democracy, national reconciliation, peace and reconstruction. In both cases, we have the duty to reciprocate the support the governments and the peoples of these countries extend and have extended to our own programme of transformation. We condemn the continued destabilisation interventions of the apartheid regime in Angola.

We look forward to the termination of the fratricidal wars and con-



flicts on the African continent, especially in Somalia, Liberia and Sudan. They have imposed enormous suffering on the peoples of these countries and unnecessary burdens on the neighbouring states.

We appeal to the belligerents in these countries to stop the bloodletting, co-operate with their neighbours and the United Nations, to arrive at a speedy settlement of these conflicts.

PROGRESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

We are encouraged by the initial steps that have been taken to find a peaceful solution to the problems facing the Palestinian and other peoples in the Middle East. The recent actions of the Government of Israel are a major setback to the search for a peaceful solution and have been rightly condemned by all who seek peace.

We support the initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to implement the programme of action agreed by the OAU and the UN to resolve the problem of Western Sahara.

The shameful conflict in the former Yugoslavia must be brought to an end. In particular, the so-called ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the atrocities that go with it, should no longer be tolerated.

BUILDING A NEW WORLD ORDER

As we change the manner in which South Africa is governed during this year, our possibilities will increase not only to change our own situation, but also to make our contribution to the building of a new world order of democracy, equality, peace and prosperity.

Let us claim our right to make this contribution on the basis that, within our own national borders, we are creating a society based on the same principles of democracy, equality, peace and prosperity for all.

YEAR OF VOTES FOR ALL

We enter 1993 conscious of important landmarks in our people's history. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the passing away of King Dinizulu ka Cetshwayo, one of the first honorary presidents of the ANC. It is also the 80th anniversary of the passing of the infamous



Land Act of 1913 which sealed the dispossession of the African people. We recall with pride the heroic 1913 mass resistance of women against the imposition of passes.

This is the centenary year of the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi, that symbol of resistance to white domination and colonialism. It also marks the 10th anniversary of the formation of the United Democratic Front which epitomised the unity in struggle of the democratic forces.

We salute all those who paid the supreme sacrifice to help bring our country to this decisive moment.

Let us grasp the opportunity and respond to the challenge of this year with the spirit and steadfastness that has always been the hallmark of the ANC!

Let us make 1993 the year during which our country effectively enters the transition to democratic rule: the year of votes for all – in which we mobilise for a decisive victory for the year of democracy!



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