

Cam/257/2007/3

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE ANC, COMRADE OLIVER TAMBO, AT THE  
OPENING OF THE SECOND NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICAN  
NATIONAL CONGRESS TANZANIA 14 - 19TH AUGUST, 1987

---

On behalf of the National Executive Committee of our movement, I salute you, and welcome you all to this historic Second National ANC Youth Conference. It is indeed truly inspiring to be here today among these hundreds of young revolutionaries who hold the future of our country and people in their hands.

We feel, as you must do, that we are here to participate in an event that will make a decisive impact on the course of our heroic and noble struggle. This is thanks to the calibre of the delegates gathered here, your political clarity, your deep sense of commitment to the goal of liberation, and your determination to make the necessary sacrifices to achieve this objective.

You are the inheritors of an organisational experience that is 75 years old. It is a glorious experience that constitutes the womb from which the new South Africa will emerge. To be the midwives of that free South Africa you need to have understood and absorbed that history and turned it into the firm bedrock from which you will advance into a future whose essence you must define by your own ideas and actions.

Through the generations, the youth, including you who are present here, have played a central role in the making of that history. In saluting you, we are saluting the cross-section of South African youth who are today locked in decisive battles on all fronts to rid our country of the scourge of colonial and racist domination. We pay tribute to these, the shock troops of our revolutionary offensive, a daring and militant contingent; workers, students, intellectuals and women. Many have laid down their lives in combat - the battle cry of our people on their lips. Many more have been detained and tortured; and some, now 30 in number, are awaiting the hangman's noose. Their heroic actions and undaunted will, your spirit of no-surrender, have earned the youth of our country the mettle of a generation that should bring to its shameful end the centuries-old system of racist domination and bigotry. With you, fellow delegates, we declare: "Freedom in our youth". We are firmly convinced that out of this Conference will be forged an even greater commitment for a decisive and rapid advance to the goal of people's power.



The through preparations that have preceded this gathering, the ~~enthusiasm~~ evinced in all your regions across the globe and the agenda you will consider during the coming days will enable you to place the Youth Section, and, therefore, ~~our movement as a whole on a better footing to help achieve~~ a decisive advance towards the conquest of power.

We have converged from far and near, on a piece of South African soil in free and independent Tanzania. Indeed, this goes to emphasise the bonds of friendship between our two countries and peoples, and the generous all-round support and co-operation we have always enjoyed from Chama Cha Mapinduzi, the Government and people of this country. We once more express our profound gratitude, Dear Tanzanian Brothers and sisters, for your preparedness to share what little you have for the victory of our common cause. In thanking you as active participants in our struggle, we pledge that we shall do everything in our power to have the tumour of apartheid excised from the body of Africa, sooner rather than later.

Comrade Chairman and fellow delegates,

Five years ago, we assembled here for the First Conference of this kind. In that gathering we held wide-ranging discussions and adopted far-reaching resolutions on the tasks that faced us. We have, since, converged at various levels, including the 1985 National Consultative Conference. The central question that runs like a red thread through all these gatherings, confronting our entire movement, is: **WHAT IS TO BE DONE THAT VICTORY MAY COME - and come soon?**

That question demands honest answers that are based on an objective assessment of our forces and those of the enemy as well as a correct understanding of the international balance of forces.

This important conference provides you with a unique opportunity to address this issue, to debate it frankly, openly and in a constructive manner, so that our revolutionary movement can benefit from the dynamism, militancy, and even the impatience that are the hallmarks of our youth. As you go through each agenda item, therefore, it becomes crucial that you assess the correctness or otherwise of your proposals and resolutions by asking the question whether these are in keeping with the pressing need to gain victory. Since the last Youth Conference, through struggle, we have driven the apartheid system into a general crisis from which it can neither recover nor extricate itself. We can, therefore, firmly assert today that the balance of forces in our country has decisively and



irreversibly shifted in favour of the oppressed and democratic majority. Botha and his henchmen can curse and froth; they can outdo themselves in murder and bloody terror; but they cannot obliterate this reality.

This, however, does not mean that the ruling racist cabal in our country faces imminent collapse or is about to surrender. What it does mean is that we must expect that this fascist clique will not only resort to the extremes of violence, but will also adopt new and extra-ordinary measures in a vain effort to save itself from destruction.

In this regard, what are the aims that Pretoria pursues? The first and most fundamental objective is, of course, the perpetration of the apartheid system of white minority domination. Whatever the spokespersons of the racist regime might say, however hard they try falsely to present this regime as one that is experiencing a metamorphosis, as a social formation that is becoming an agent for democratic change, they cannot camouflage the reality that the core of its policy is a desperate attempt to perpetuate the old and to deny the future.

The Pretoria regime has decided that to succeed in this attention it has to do two things. The first of these is that it must win over to its side as many of the oppressed as possible. Towards this end it is ready to do anything and everything. It is willing to bribe and to blackmail; to terrorise and to intimidate; to persuade and to cajole; to deceive and to delude - all in an effort to gather to its side all those blacks who are unable either to resist its blandishments or to withstand its pressures. At the same time, the racists want to create sufficient space for their puppets - both actual and potential - to manoeuvre, to breathe, to exist and even to multiply. This demands that they remove from the arena of struggle all or as many as possible of our country's forces of genuine democratic change. Consequently, the second objective that the Pretoria regime pursues with the greatest vigour, is the decapitalisation of our movement for national liberation.

In practice, this amounts to dark and evil conspiracies physically to liquidate the people's movement, the ANC, and especially its leadership, at all levels, and further to extend and intensify the campaign of terror against the leaders and activists of the mass democratic movement.



The statements that have been made by some of the adherents of white minority rule - that the activists of the democratic movement should be rounded up, herded into stadiums and slaughtered in their thousands - should be taken seriously. Equally menacing and real are the plans of the racists to kidnap and assassinate individual leaders of our movement.

Already, Comrades, Cassius Make, Paul Dikeledi and others have been murdered. Ismail Ibrahim Sheila Nyanda and others have been abducted. The enemy is hatching other plans to impose the same fate on as many of our leaders as possible. There is a trial going on in London even now, of people who are charged with conspiring to kidnap senior leaders of our movement.

The seriousness of this offensive is probably best illustrated by the murder by the racists of our leader, brother and comrade-in-arms, Samora Moises Machel and more than 30 other people who were travelling with him in the fated plane. That it was possible to conceive, plan and execute this dastardly crime indicates the true measure of the desperation of the Pretoria regime and its total lack of the most rudimentary elements of human decency and morality. As the crisis of the apartheid system deepens, we too will be targets, as we already are, of an unbridled and murderous offensive by a regime that is fighting for its very survival. In this state of desperation it has no regard whatsoever for the national independence and territorial integrity of any one of the countries of Southern Africa whose nationals it invariably murders.

The racists hope that if they succeed to eliminate us - which they cannot - they will stop our all-round offensive in its tracks, suppress both the mass political and the armed struggles, destroy the mass democratic organisations and thus save the apartheid system.

The believe that in this situation, they will then be able to impose their puppets on our people and enter into an arrangement with these collaborators, through the so-called National Statutory Council, which they will present as a process leading to the negotiated settlement for which so many in the world are clamouring. The perspectives I am talking about, of a desperate and sustained enemy counter-offensive, is not something that will happen in the distant future. I am talking of a reality that is already on top of us and that the apartheid regime feels it cannot avoid, precisely because of the victories we have scored and are scoring in the struggle both within our country and internationally.



It is little wonder, therefore, that the Pretoria regime chose you, and even little children, as its special target in its campaign of repression, which has been characterised by murder and massacres, mass arrests and torture as well as criminal attempts to transform our young into enemy agents through brainwashing and indoctrination. It is a matter of great pride to our movement and to all our people, dear comrades, that you successfully withstood this the most murderous onslaught our youth has ever had to face.

You not only withstood this terrible ordeal, but you emerged from it steeled and better prepared to wage the real and bitter battles ahead of us. The entire leadership of our movement inside and outside the country, inside and outside prison, takes pride in the knowledge that among our fighting youth - in the trade unions and other mass democratic organisations, in the street and area committees and other organs of the people's power; in the villages and in the student movement, in the End Conscription Campaign, in Umkhonto We Sizwe and the self-defence committees, in the ANC and the rest of our liberation alliance there are to be found many heroes and heroines of our Revolution. We are confident that the revolutionary and democratic youth movement of our country will live up to its responsibilities in the great challenges that lie ahead. However, what the leadership says about the youth is one thing; what we say as theyouth, know about ourselves could be quite another. In this regard, can we, each and everyone of us, truly say we have attained the level of political maturity, the spirit of self-sacrifice, the loyalty to the movement and the revolution, and the love for the people which are fundamental to our ability to discharge our responsibilities as the vanguard of struggle?

Can we truly say that we have overcome the mentality and habits of individualism which are a feature of the society from which we come? In the past, this has worked to create an unhealthy spirit of competition among ourselves and undermined the atmosphere of comradeship without which the task of building up the force that must win us victory becomes that much more difficult?

In its worst manifestations, this attitude of self-centred individualism has resulted in some of us falling prey to temptations the enemy has put in front of us. Thus you find some people agreeing to serve the enemy in exchange for promise of money and a decent life of comfort -

... ~~it is but with the lives of our people, because it is attained at the expense of our revolution.~~



An important element contributing to the panic that has seized the architects of racism and fascism in our country is the fact that these can no longer count on the loyalty of the white minority rule. The more we intensify the struggle, the greater the numbers of whites who begin to reach out towards the democratic and non-racial positions contained in the Freedom Charter and advanced over the years by the ANC and the rest of the progressive forces of our country.

The spectre haunts the Pretoria regime that it will increasingly find itself confronted with a solid block of black and white South Africans who will march hand in hand against racism and fascism, and together sweep the criminal system of apartheid into the dustbin of history. Since it has found itself unable to destroy the ideas we represent or to indefinitely insulate the white population from our democratic vision, the apartheid regime has decided to destroy in one way or another all who propagate that vision.

Comrades leaders of the revolutionary youth movement of our country, this is the reality that faces our entire democratic movement. Your tasks in this situation are clear. As you have occupied the front ranks in our struggle over the years, it is your duty to maintain your positions.

It is your duty to act as the advance forces that will resist and repel the enemy and move on to the offensive. This requires that we attack, refusing to adopt a defensive posture, refusing to allow the enemy to gain the upper hand that he seeks. Needless to say, the inevitable consequence will be the generalised escalation of the conflict, engulfing the whole region of Southern Africa. Equally inevitable, however, is the demise of the apartheid system.

You, comrades, are engaged on all fronts of this intensifying struggle. You are as much in the People's Army, Umkhonto We Sizwe, as you are in our underground political structures. You are as active in the mass democratic movement, in all echelons, as you are in institutions of learning in the international campaign for the total isolation of the apartheid regime. You were the battering ram, the young lions, who transformed into reality our call to make the country ungovernable and apartheid unworkable. You gave organisational expression to the call to ensure the emergence of organs of people's power.



The view that one's individual interests and desires supercede those of the people and the revolution must never be allowed to find a foothold among our ranks. We must fight it with everything in our power and assert the principle that our lives are, in their entirety, dedicated to the service of the people. We must ensure that this attitude prevails, in particular among our students who are studying at various centres of learning throughout the world. It must become part of our outlook that the knowledge we acquire is intended precisely to improve our capacity to serve our people, our movement and our revolution.

We would like to see this conference as a basis for us to improve the understanding among all the contingents of our movement at home and abroad and enhance the cooperation among them, to forge firm links between them and other youth detachments in Namibia, in Southern Africa, on the African continent and the rest of the progressive world, to use the strength, maturity and experience of one detachment to improve the combat capacity of another and to think, plan and act together as one force in the struggle for liberation, social progress, disarmament and world peace.

Comrade Chairman and fellow delegates,  
With unsurpassed determination, dedication and discipline the black working class contingent in South Africa, of which the youth is a vital galvanising component, has taken its place at the head of the motive forces of our revolution. The recent general strikes and the wave of strike actions, on a scale unprecedented in our history, all reflect the deepening political consciousness among black workers and a systematic approach to the battles fought around their day-to-day demands. The current mine workers strike in particular, the biggest in the history of the mining industry, with implications for the region as a whole, calls for massive and immediate financial and solidarity support principally from within South Africa itself, and especially by the mass democratic movement. But we all have an obligation to mobilise and activate the international working-class movement, and the international community as a whole.

On another front, combat units of Umkhonto We Sizwe have multiplied their actions in the country, particularly over the past 7 months. It is in the context of these actions that one of these units, like all others, based and operating within South Africa, exploded a car bomb at the Johannesburg military headquarters, taking as casualties an undisclosed number of soldiers. It was timed to go off on the same day and time when exactly 3 weeks earlier, Comrade Cassius Make, Paul Dikeledi and a Mozambican woman comrade were assassinated by agents of the Pretoria regime.



On the mass popular front, the State of Emergency has done nothing to prevent the growing strength of the mass democratic movement, despite the conditions under which it operates. New democratic organisations have been formed under the noses of the repressive forces. The formation of the South African Youth Congress is one of the achievements of the democratic movement as a whole. There is much that needs to be done to fulfil the tasks SAYCO has set itself, but nothing can subtract from the gigantic beginnings that have been made.

As we march on, it is becoming more and more obvious that the so-called unity within the laager is nothing more than a facade. An increasing number of groups and individuals are starting to question the wisdom of defending a system doomed to inevitable destruction. Many such forces come from the courtyards of the Afrikaner elite, big business, youth and religious community - and they are genuinely interested in finding alternatives to the destructible apartheid system. They might still be groping in the dark, their vision eclipsed by centuries of privilege and business self-interest, but they do acknowledge that apartheid has to go if peace should reign in our land. In a clear and systematic manner the ANC and the democratic movement in its entirety has to find areas of agreement and precipitate multi-form action to ensure that apartheid does go.

This is a task that knows no boundaries, a task that equally confronts the international community. We have over many years inspired the emergence and development of a massive international anti-apartheid movement. Thanks to the efforts of these fighters, apartheid and its representatives stand condemned and isolated - deserving pariahs in the world community of nations. On the other hand, the ANC has emerged in this arena too as the alternative power.



But that the regime should continue to exist, is due, to a great extent, to the support it receives from world imperialism. Their investments, loans and technology feed the apartheid economy and the repressive machineries it shoulders. This is a challenge to us - the youth and the rest of the membership of the movement, the anti-apartheid movement and all those who claim to stand for democracy. The battle for the total isolation of apartheid South Africa has to intensify.

Among the forces locked in battle against the common enemy are our fellow combatants and comrades-in-arms, the heroic youth and people of Namibia under the unchallenged leadership of SWAPO. We send them our warmest combat greetings, as we do the fighters of Western Sahara and Palestine.

We salute the great youth, peoples and countries of the Frontline States who between them respectively hold the Chairmanship of the Frontline States, SADCC, the OAU and the Non-Aligned Movement - a concentration of power and influence in full keeping with the demands of the situation in our country, Namibia and the region.

We salute, too, all our other friends and allies throughout the world, including Africa, the socialist community, the Scandinavian and other nations and people who have stood and continue to stand by us in the struggle to rid the world of the apartheid crime against humanity.

Comrade Chairman and fellow delegates,

An extensive programme stands before us. Many crucial questions await answers. Apartheid's killing fields cry out for redemption. The National Executive Committee wishes you the most rewarding encounter. Let us advance to people's power.

FREEDOM IN OUR YOUTH!  
IHLOMILE!



ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE ANC, COMRADE OLIVER TAMBO, AT THE  
OPENING OF THE SECOND NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICAN  
NATIONAL CONGRESS TANZANIA 14 - 19TH AUGUST, 1987

---

On behalf of the National Executive Committee of our movement, I salute you, and welcome you all to this historic Second National ANC Youth Conference. It is indeed truly inspiring to be here today among these hundreds of young revolutionaries who hold the future of our country and people in their hands.

We feel, as you must do, that we are here to participate in an event that will make a decisive impact on the course of our heroic and noble struggle. This is thanks to the calibre of the delegates gathered herer, your political clarity, your deep sense of commitment to the goal of liberation, and your determination to make the necessary sacrifices to achieve this objective.

You are the inheritors of an organisational experience that is 75 years old. It is a glorious experience that constitutes the womb from which the new South Africa will emerge. ~~To be the midwives of that free South Africa~~ you need to have understood and absorbed that history and turned it into the firm bedrock from which you will advance into a future whose essence you must define by your own ideas and actions.

Through the generations, the youth, including you who are present here, have played a central role in the making of that history. In saluting you, we are saluting the cross-section of South African youth who are today locked in decisive battles on all fronts to rid our country of the scourge of colonial and racist domination. We pay tribute to these, the shock troops of our revolutionary offensive, a daring and militant contingent; workers, students, intellectuals and women. Many have laid down their lives in combat - the battle cry of our people on their lips. Many more have been detained and tortured; and some, now 30 in number, are awaiting the hangmans' noose. Their heroic actions and undaunted will, your spirit of no-surrender, have earned the youth of our country the mettle of a generation that should bring to its shameful end the centuries-old system of racist domination and bigotry. With you, fellow delegates, we declare: "Freedom in our youth". We are firmly convinced that out of this Conference will be forged an even greater commitment for a decisive and rapid advance to the goal of people's power.



The through preparations that have preceded this gathering, the enthusiasm evinced in all your regions across the globe and the agenda you will consider during the coming days will enable you to place the Youth Section, and, therefore, our movement as a whole on a better footing to help achieve a decisive advance towards the conquest of power.

We have converged from far and near, on a piece of South African soil in free and independent Tanzania. Indeed, this goes to emphasise the bonds of friendship between our two countries and peoples, and the generous all-round support and co-operation we have always enjoyed from Chama Cha Mapinduzi, the Government and people of this country. We once more express our profound gratitude, Dear Tanzanian Brothers and sisters, for your preparedness to share what little you have for the victory of our common cause. In thanking you as active participants in our struggle, we pledge that we shall do everything in our power to have the tumour of apartheid excised from the body of Africa, sooner rather than later.

Comrade Chairman and fellow delegates,

Five years ago, we assembled here for the First Conference of this kind. In that gathering we held wide-ranging discussions and adopted far-reaching resolutions on the tasks that faced us. We have, since, converged at various levels, including the 1985 National Consultative Conference. The central question that runs like a red thread through all these gatherings, confronting our entire movement, is: WHAT IS TO BE DONE THAT VICTORY MAY COME-- and come soon?

That question demands honest answers that are based on an objective assessment of our forces and those of the enemy as well as a correct understanding of the international balance of forces.

This important conference provides you with a unique opportunity to address this issue, to debate it frankly, openly and in a constructive manner, so that our revolutionary movement can benefit from the dynamism, militancy, and even the impatience that are the hallmarks of our youth. As you go through each agenda item, therefore, it becomes crucial that you assess the correctness or otherwise of your proposals and resolutions by asking the question whether these are in keeping with the pressing need to gain victory. Since the last Youth Conference, through struggle, we have driven the apartheid system into a general crisis from which it can neither recover nor extricate itself. We can, therefore, firmly assert today that the balance of forces in our country has decisively and



irreversibly shifted in favour of the oppressed and democratic majority. Botha and his henchmen can curse and froth; they can outdo themselves in murder and bloody terror; but they cannot obliterate this reality.

This, however, does not mean that the ruling racist cabal in our country faces imminent collapse or is about to surrender. What it does mean is that we must expect that this fascist clique will not only resort to the extremes of violence, but will also adopt new and extra-ordinary measures in a vain effort to save itself from destruction.

In this regard, what are the aims that Pretoria pursues? The first and most fundamental objective is, of course, the perpetration of the apartheid system of white minority domination. Whatever the spokespersons of the racist regime might say, however hard they try falsely to present this regime as one that is experiencing a metamorphosis, as a social formation that is becoming an agent for democratic change, they cannot camouflage the reality that the core of its policy is a desperate attempt to perpetuate the old and to deny the future.

The Pretoria regime has decided that to succeed in this attention it has to do two things. The first of these is that it must win over to its side as many of the oppressed as possible. Towards this end it is ready to do anything and everything. It is willing to bribe and to blackmail; to terrorise and to intimidate; to persuade and to cajole; to deceive and to delude - all in an effort to gather to its side all those blacks who are unable either to resist its blandishments or to withstand its pressures. At the same time, the racists want to create sufficient space for their puppets - both actual and potential - to manoeuvre, to breathe, to exist and even to multiply. This demands that they remove from the arena of struggle all or as many as possible of our country's forces of genuine democratic change. Consequently, the second objective that the Pretoria regime pursues with the greatest vigour, is the decapitalisation of our movement for national liberation.

In practice, this amounts to dark and evil conspiracies physically to liquidate the people's movement, the ANC, and especially its leadership, at all levels, and further to extend and intensify the campaign of terror against the leaders and activists of the mass democratic movement.



The statements that have been made by some of the adherents of white minority rule - that the activists of the democratic movement should be rounded up, herded into stadiums and slaughtered in their thousands - should be taken seriously. Equally menacing and real are the plans of the racists to kidnap and assassinate individual leaders of our movement.

Already, Comrades, Cassius Make, Paul Dikeledi and others have been murdered. Ismail Ibrahim Sheila Nyanda and others have been abducted. The enemy is hatching other plans to impose the same fate on as many of our leaders as possible. There is a trial going on in London even now, of people who are charged with conspiring to kidnap senior leaders of our movement.

The seriousness of this offensive is probably best illustrated by the murder by the racists of our leader, brother and comrade-in-arms, Samora Moises Machel and more than 30 other people who were travelling with him in the fated plane. That it was possible to conceive, plan and execute this dastardly crime indicates the true measure of the desperation of the Pretoria regime and its total lack of the most rudimentary elements of human decency and morality. As the crisis of the apartheid system deepens, we too will be targets, as we already are, of an unbridled and murderous offensive by a regime that is fighting for its very survival. In this state of desperation it has no regard whatsoever for the national independence and territorial integrity of any one of the countries of Southern Africa whose nationals it invariably murders.

The racists hope that if they succeed to eliminate us - which they cannot - they will stop our all-round offensive in its tracks, suppress both the mass political and the armed struggles, destroy the mass democratic organisations and thus save the apartheid system.

The believe that in this situation, they will then be able to impose their puppets on our people and enter into an arrangement with these collaborators, through the so-called National Statutory Council, which they will present as a process leading to the negotiated settlement for which so many in the world are clamouring. The perspectives I am talking about, of a desperate and sustained enemy counter-offensive, is not something that will happen in the distant future. I am talking of a reality that is already on top of us and that the apartheid regime feels it cannot avoid, precisely because of the victories we have scored and are scoring in the struggle both within our country and internationally.



An important element contributing to the panic that has seized the architects of racism and fascism in our country is the fact that these can no longer count on the loyalty of the white minority rule. The more we intensify the struggle, the greater the numbers of whites who begin to reach out towards the democratic and non-racial positions contained in the Freedom Charter and advanced over the years by the ANC and the rest of the progressive forces of our country.

The spectre haunts the Pretoria regime that it will increasingly find itself confronted with a solid block of black and white South Africans who will march hand in hand against racism and fascism, and together sweep the criminal system of apartheid into the dustbin of history. Since it has found itself unable to destroy the ideas we represent or to indefinitely insulate the white population from our democratic vision, the apartheid regime has decided to destroy in one way or another all who propagate that vision.

Comrades leaders of the revolutionary youth movement of our country, this is the reality that faces our entire democratic movement. Your tasks in this situation are clear. As you have occupied the front ranks in our struggle over the years, it is your duty to maintain your positions.

It is your duty to act as the advance forces that will resist and repel the enemy and move on to the offensive. This requires that we attack, refusing to adopt a defensive posture, refusing to allow the enemy to gain the upper hand that he seeks. Needless to say, the inevitable consequence will be the generalised escalation of the conflict, engulfing the whole region of Southern Africa. Equally inevitable, however, is the demise of the apartheid system.

You, comrades, are engaged on all fronts of this intensifying struggle. You are as much in the People's Army, Umkhonto We Sizwe, as you are in our underground political structures. You are as active in the mass democratic movement, in all echelons, as you are in institutions of learning in the international campaign for the total isolation of the apartheid regime. You were the battering ram, the young lions, who transformed into reality our call to make the country ungovernable and apartheid unworkable. You gave organisational expression to the call to ensure the emergence of organs of people's power.



It is little wonder, therefore, that the Pretoria regime chose you, and even little children, as its special target in its campaign of repression, which has been characterised by murders and massacres, mass arrests and torture as well as criminal attempts to transform our young into enemy agents through brainwashing and indoctrination. It is a matter of great pride to our movement and to all our people, dear comrades, that you successfully withstood this the most murderous onslaught our youth has ever had to face.

You not only withstood this terrible ordeal, but you emerged from it steeled and better prepared to wage the hard and bitter battles ahead of us. The entire leadership of our movement inside and outside the country, inside and outside prison, takes pride in the knowledge that among our fighting youth - in the trade unions and other mass democratic organisations, in the street and area committees and other organs of the people's power; in the villages and in the student movement, in the End Conscription Campaign, in Umkhonto We Sizwe and the self-defence committees, in the ANC and the rest of our liberation alliance, there are to be found many heroes and heroines of our Revolution. We are confident that the revolutionary and democratic youth movement of our country will live up to its responsibilities in the great challenges that lie ahead. However, what the leadership says about the youth is one thing; what we say as the youth, know about ourselves could be quite another. In this regard, can we, each and everyone of us, truly say we have attained the level of political maturity, the spirit of self-sacrifice, the loyalty to the movement and the revolution, and the love for the people which are fundamental to our ability to discharge our responsibilities as the vanguard of struggle?

Can we truly say that we have overcome the mentality and habits of individualism which are a feature of the society from which we come? In the past, this has worked to create an unhealthy spirit of competition among ourselves and undermined the atmosphere of comradeship without which the task of building up the force that must win us victory becomes that much more difficult?

In its worst manifestations, this attitude of self-centred individualism has resulted in some of us falling prey to temptations the enemy has put in front of us. Thus you find young people agreeing to serve the enemy in exchange for promise of money and a comfortable life of comfort - ~~in exchange for~~ ~~it is but with~~ ~~the lives of our people, because it~~ ~~is attained at the expense of~~ our revolution.



The view that one's individual interests and desires supercede those of the people and the revolution must never be allowed to find a foothold among our ranks. We must fight it with everything in our power and assert the principle that our lives are, in their entirety, dedicated to the service of the people. We must ensure that this attitude prevails, in particular among our students who are studying at various centres of learning throughout the world. It must become part of our outlook that the knowledge we acquire is intended precisely to improve our capacity to serve our people, our movement and our revolution.

We would like to see this conference as a basis for us to improve the understanding among all the contingents of our movement at home and abroad and enhance the cooperation among them, to forge firm links between them and other youth detachments in Namibia, in Southern Africa, on the African continent and the rest of the progressive world, to use the strength, maturity and experience of one detachment to improve the combat capacity of another and to think, plan and act together as one force in the struggle for liberation, social progress, disarmament and world peace.

Comrade Chairman and fellow delegates, With unsurpassed determination, dedication and discipline the black working class contingent in South Africa, of which the youth is a vital galvanising component, has taken its place at the head of the motive forces of our revolution. The recent general strikes and the wave of strike actions, on a scale unprecedented in our history, all reflect the deepening political consciousness among black workers and a systematic approach to the battles fought around their day-to-day demands. The current mine workers strike, in particular, the biggest in the history of the mining industry, with implications for the region as a whole, calls for massive and immediate financial and solidarity support principally from within South Africa itself, and especially by the mass democratic movement. But we all have an obligation to mobilise and activate the international working-class movement, and the international community as a whole.

On another front, combat units of Umkhonto We Sizwe have multiplied their actions in the country, particularly over the past 7 months. It is in the context of these actions that one of these units, like all others, based and operating within South Africa, exploded a car bomb at the Johannesburg military headquarters, taking as casualties an undisclosed number of soldiers. It was timed to go off on the same day and time when exactly 3 weeks earlier, Comrade Cassius Make, Paul Dikeledi and a Mozambican woman comrade were assassinated by agents of the Pretoria regime.



On the mass popular front, the State of Emergency has done nothing to prevent the growing strength of the mass democratic movement, despite the conditions under which it operates. New democratic organisations have been formed under the noses of the repressive forces. The formation of the South African Youth Congress is one of the achievements of the democratic movement as a whole. There is much that needs to be done to fulfil the tasks SAYCO has set itself, but nothing can subtract from the gigantic beginnings that have been made.

As we march on, it is becoming more and more obvious that the so-called unity within the laager is nothing more than a facade. An increasing number of groups and individuals are starting to question the wisdom of defending a system doomed to inevitable destruction. Many such forces come from the courtyards of the Afrikaner elite, big business, youth and religious community - and they are genuinely interested in finding alternatives to the destructible apartheid system. They might still be groping in the dark, their vision eclipsed by centuries of privilege and business self-interest, but they do acknowledge that apartheid has to go if peace should reign in our land. In a clear and systematic manner the ANC and the democratic movement in its entirety has to find areas of agreement and precipitate multi-form action to ensure that apartheid does go.

This is a task that knows no boundaries, a task that equally confronts the international community. We have over many years inspired the emergence and development of a massive international anti-apartheid movement. Thanks to the efforts of these fighters, apartheid and its representatives stand condemned and isolated - deserving pariahs in the world community of nations. On the other hand, the ANC has emerged in this arena too as the alternative power.



But that the regime should continue to exist, is due, to a great extent, to the support it receives from world imperialism. Their investments, loans and technology feed the apartheid economy and the repressive machineries it shoulders. This is a challenge to us - the youth and the rest of the membership of the movement, the anti-apartheid movement and all those who claim to stand for democracy. The battle for the total isolation of apartheid South Africa has to intensify.

Among the forces locked in battle against the common enemy are our fellow combatants and comrades-in-arms, the heroic youth and people of Namibia under the unchallenged leadership of SWAPO. We send them our warmest combat greetings, as we do the fighters of Western Sahara and Palestine.

We salute the great youth, peoples and countries of the Frontline States who between them respectively hold the chairmanship of the Frontline States, SADC, the OAU and the Non-Aligned Movement - a concentration of power and influence in full keeping with the demands of the situation in our country, Namibia and the region.

We salute, too, all our other friends and allies throughout the world, including Africa, the socialist community, the Scandinavian and other nations and people who have stood and continue to stand by us in the struggle to rid the world of the apartheid crime against humanity.

Comrade Chairman and fellow delegates,

An extensive programme stands before us. Many crucial questions await answers. Apartheid's killing fields cry out for redemption. The National Executive Committee wishes you the most rewarding encounter. Let us advance to people's power.

FREEDOM IN OUR YOUTH!  
IHLOMILE!