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"Democracy means freedom to chooseâ\200\235

INKATHA

â\200\230Inkatha Freedom Party
IQembu leNkatha Yenkululeko

CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2001

ADDRESS BY
MANGOSUTHU BUTHELEZI, MP
MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND
PRESIDENT OF THE INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY

MOQHAKA SECONDARY SCHOOL, SEBOKENG, GAUTENG : MARCH 21, 2001

The Master of Ceremonies, the Honourable Minister of Correctional Services, Mr BM Skosana, MP; the KwaZulu Natal Minister of Public Works, the Rev CJ Mtetwa; Members of both the national Parliament and the Gauteng Legislature; Mayors, Councillors; Indunas and honoured guests. Today, across our country, South Africans are gathered in venues such as this to celebrate the inherent dignity of man. For South Africans, Human Rights Day carries special significance as an

expression of our commitment towards building a new culture of respect and equality within our culturally diverse society. We conducted our struggle for liberation to entrench human rights in our land. However, we must now realise that the entrenchment of human rights does not by itself translate into liberation for as long as the delivery of services and social justice by government does not provide substance and the fulfilment of such rights.

The struggle for human rights now becomes a struggle for development, so that when the Constitution proclaims that everyone has the right to have their dignity respected and protected, this statement is not frustrated by the majority of our people still living in abject social and economic conditions, with no jobs, no essential services and in a cloud of ignorance because of a lack of education, knowledge and exposure. This struggle is now much harder than it was before. It will be won only through development. Since its inception, the IFP has dedicated its entire existence to development and is now ready to lead the next stage of our struggle for liberation.

Only through development can we forge a real nation. Through this endeavour, we are building a nation, rather than a geographically linked people. We are a nation for reasons which transcend that of a similar geographical position, political structure, or historical experience. We are a nation because, on a day such as this, we can take these common bonds and declare that here, in a democratic system, we will establish together a future that will never allow our past to define us. Under the IFP leadership, the future struggle for development will forge a new nation capable of taking real pride in what it has achieved.

President: The Hon. Pince Mangosuthu G. Buthelezl
National Chaimnan: Mr LPHM Mtshali

We have emerged from a time of divisions and strife which generated gross violations of human rights, the transgression of humanitarian principles in violent conflict and a legacy of hatred, fear, lawlessness and suspicion. We will never return to this past for as long as we hold fast to the truth that every man, woman and child is a being of value and dignity, bearing inalienable rights. Human rights do not accrue to us by virtue of law, or by virtue of us all agreeing that any one of us should have them. They can neither be bestowed nor taken away. They cannot be diminished or increased. They are inherent. They exist because we are human. It is the duty of any legitimate government to recognize and protect them. Against this test alone the success and legitimacy of any government should be assessed.

Over the last ten years a remarkable process has unfolded in South Africa which expresses a national commitment to recognising human rights and restoring what has been damaged during our past where we lost sight of this recognition, and violated a principle which some declared did not exist. Human rights exist without our willing them into existence, yet they cannot retain meaning unless we willingly resist their violation. During the apartheid era, the term human rights lost its meaning for thousands upon thousands of South Africans. We felt the tremendous sense of horror and confusion, knowing even without reasoning that something was terribly wrong when homes were razed to the ground, health services were denied, education was suppressed and men and women could not walk down a street without a legal document stating that they may do so.

I felt this horror and the confusion within my country. I was born into the midst of this time and grew up in an era where feelings across the globe were being stirred up against the abuses and violations of human rights. In the Western world it seemed an evil which had long been overcome, but here in South Africa it was an evil which still fed on the darkness and lies of a few powerful people. I could not silently live out my life in my motherland knowing that my people sank oppressed beneath the burden of violations that went to the very heart of humanity. I responded as many of us responded, with a fierce determination to change our country at whatever personal cost. I took up my cross and carried it for the sake of my people and for the sake of my country. It was respect for human dignity which drove me to establish Inkatha, and an uncompromising commitment to human rights which has kept me walking the path of leadership.

I will not rest until we have won the victory of a new human rights based culture. I will not stop until South Africa has become a unified nation through development, development, and development.

In 1975, the time for Inkatha yeNkululeko yeSizwe, Kgare ya Tokoloho ya Setjhaba, had come. South Africans needed a home of political mobilisation from which we could speak against the oppression of human rights and the violation of human dignity. Inkatha fast became the single largest membership based liberation movement and remained such for many years. Through Inkatha, many ordinary South Africans worked together to raise the standard of life in our poorest communities, building schools with no funds, learning self-help and self-reliance and regaining the dignity of people who can stand in the face of adversity. In our daily political activity, we tied the fight for human rights to the struggle for development and we raised human dignity through development.

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This had a bearing on my own personal choices as | realised that my duty was that of finding the path which could best serve the real developmental needs of my people, rather than my personal ambition. | took up my role as traditional head of my clan and then as Chief Minister of the erstwhile KwaZulu Government. at the request of leaders of the ANC, such as Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Chief Albert Lutuli and others. In those days, we stood together as liberation activists, regardless of divisions in ideology. From my position as Chief Minister, | was able to act against the apartheid regime from within, destabilising a system which was severely internally flawed, while promoting development.

A few vyears later, the establishment of Inkatha also provided a response to the changing winds of liberation ideology when certain segments of the liberation movement rejected the original basis of non-violence, passive resistance and high moral ground as tools of political action, to embrace the bloody weapons of an armed struggle. My conscience bound me and | could not agree to follow this divergent course of action. | knew intrinsically that no fellow South African is truly an enemy to be killed, defeated or destroyed. | also knew that a liberated South Africa could only be rebuilt into a prosperous and equally beneficial South Africa through a righteous victory constructed on negotiation, reason and justice. The struggle for development after liberation would require the contribution of all, to build a new country for the benefit of all. Bloodshed would only increase the violation of human rights, and extend the conflict from being black-on-white, to tragically become black-on-black.

This is indeed what happened, yet the truth of the dynamics driving the armed conflict is only now beginning to emerge. Speaking at the unveiling of a monument to the victims of violence in Thokoza in 1999, President Thabo Mbeki said â\200\234For some time we lost our focus. We forgot what the real problem was and targeted those with whom we should have been walking towards freedom.â\200\235 By virtue of the passing of time, my stand against the armed struggle has been justified and accepted as having been morally, economically and socially correct. With sad words, President Mbeki acknowledged this fact, saying of the change in ideologies which spawned the armed struggle â\200\234it seemed as though we had embarked on a path of self-destructionâ\200\235.

Foreseeing its consequences, | rejected the armed struggle, and | was not alone. The success of Inkatha as a liberation movement announced that thousands of South Africans shared my heart. Thousands knew that we could never justify letting blood by pointing to the blood our people had already shed. Had Inkatha given in to the armed struggle, our country would have run red with destroyed human lives and South Africa would have been reduced to ashes, and the hope for development would have forever been lost. ' This is the truth about Inkatha, that we never accepted the abuse or violation of human rights in any form, from any quarter. The truth about Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the leader of Inkatha, is that | never once perpetrated, ordered, authorised, ratified or condoned any gross violation of human rights. Thousands upon thousands of lives were lost in the armed struggle, the overwhelming majority of whom were black, but the conflict arose in a clash of ideologies in which Inkatha never accepted, either passively or out loud, the route of violence and bloodshed.

| speak of these things today as we celebrate Human Rights Day 2001, because | feel that the truth is finally being made available to all who have eyes to see. The struggle for development must bring us closer together and, in order to do so, we

need to overcome the lies about our past which still divide many of our people. | trust that the truth will be known in South Africa, and the truth will set us free. It was not for my own benefit that | challenged the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission when it implicated without basis Inkatha and its leader in gross violations of human rights. It was not for me, but for an entire generation of South Africans who stood side by side, hand in hand, building rather than destroying, working rather than killing, and committing to development, rather than committing violations against the very South Africans with whom we would one day share our country on a free and equal basis. | could not allow those people who sacrificed so much to maintain the principle of non-violence, who rejected revenge even when their children and fathers lay dead before them, to find their names on a list with murderers, in a terribly misguided attempt to reconcile South Africans.

| am proud to say that the Constitutional Court overturned a decision made by the Cape High Court to bar me from accessing the documents and testimony upon which the TRC based its gravely erroneous and damaging findings. Now at last we may embark upon the correct course towards reconciliation, which is that of revealing truth and shining its light to dispel the strongholds of darkness. It is not correct that we take any course at any cost to bring peace among our people, for peace so attained will not last. It is like a person who diligently sweeps their house, but places the dust under the carpet. Sooner or later the carpet is going to be lifted, and all that was worked for will amount to nothing, and we will need to start again. | believe that we need to sweep our country from top to bottom, clearing away all the deceit and injustice which continues to hold us captive in chains of suspicion, hatred and racial distrust.

Inkatha yeNkululeko yeSizwe, the National Cultural Liberation Movement, served its purpose to ensure that today, we have a country that can be rebuilt on the basis of truth, equality, justice and democracy. Today, the IFP has a great mission to complete by building on the legacy of our past to provide the leadership our country needs for its future. | believe that a new era is just dawning in which we can establish this new country by opening the way for South Africans to work together for development. Development is the key to restoring all that we have lost. Development is the means by which we may restore dignity, justice and respect for human rights. Indeed, development needs to be the single-minded goal of the government of South Africa and the single-minded purpose of every South African. We need a leadership which can drive development, not haphazardly or half-heartedly or in any old way, but in a single straight line of discipline, experience and vision which leads to a genuinely liberated South Africa. The Inkatha Freedom Party /s that leadership.

The time for the Inkatha Freedom Party has come. At the last local government elections we had the greatest victory of any political party, for we increased our support base by 22% which is a proportionally greater increase than that gained by any other political party. This marks a trend on which we must now build to prepare for the 2004 elections. Once again the people are backing the IFP as the one which gives voice to what we are wanting for our country. We must make sure that in the 2004 elections this voice can be heard with sufficient power and strength so that it can indeed provide to our country the leadership for development it needs.

I am not alone in advocating the way of the IFP as the way of development. Thousands upon thousands of South Africans know it is true; the IFP is the party of development. We won the elections in many constituencies, and we are now ready to fulfil the responsibility with which we have been mandated, to seek development for all our people and transform human rights from a statement of principle into a South African reality. Human rights encompass every area of human life, including the rights of liberty, dignity, civil and political rights, justice rights, intellectual and cultural rights, and spiritual rights. Our political success will make these rights a living reality, rather than an empty promise.

We know that the recognition and fulfilment of human rights in the fullest sense have not been realised because of a lack of development. Last year, the IFP adopted a Charter for Development which states in its preamble that we believe development holds the key to the true liberation of the people of South Africa.

According to the spirit of our Charter, we are determined to achieve the complete liberation of all South Africans from poverty, a lack of education, exposure and experience, inability to access services, poor standards of health care and welfare, unemployment, criminality and fear. The fight against HIV/AIDS which we continue to wage, is a part of our march towards development. It is a freeing of people from deadly ignorance.

The development we are actively seeking is merely a continuation of what the IFP has worked for in the past 25 years through community upliftment, and the promotion of self-help and self-reliance. We know that there are not enough resources to rely on government hand-outs alone, for even if equitable distribution of resources could be achieved, thousands would still not have enough to subsist or hold together body and soul. It is therefore irresponsible to make promises about government delivery which quietly encourage people to sit back and wait for development to come from government. The IFP will not engage this dangerous game of baby-sitting. We intend to grow our fledgling democracy into a liberated and prosperous country through development, development, development, from the ground up.

I want to emphasise that from the beginning we tried to structure our organisation on the foundation of discipline. We can espouse the loftiest concepts of human rights, but if we are not disciplined these will be meaningless. After our local government elections, we have seen quite a few instances of gross indiscipline in our organisation. We have seen this even in other organisations. Lack of discipline is the very beginning of the rot that once it sets in, cannot be controlled. Even when it comes to development, we can not do much unless we tackle development in a team spirit. This means that we should respect leadership, whether it is in branches, regions, provinces or at national level. We should rather eradicate recalcitrant elements, rather than present a facade which covers the rot of indiscipline.

We are now, after the local elections, faced with the most difficult stage of liberation which is delivery to our people. Without this delivery our liberation will have no meaning for the majority of our people. Let us understand that we cannot hope to tackle this challenge like a rowdy crowd that is undisciplined. The first step to our successful delivery is discipline.

Development must be the result of a joint effort between every sector of our society. Indeed, development must become our national goal. I believe that as we develop our communities, individuals will experience a return of personal and collective dignity which may restore human rights to their rightful place as inherent, inalienable and of value. When the concept of human rights has regained meaning in every life, South Africans will begin to recognise that such rights, as they are expressed in our Constitution, belong to whoever is a human being. It is not because they are enshrined in our Constitution that they exist or demand to be recognised, but because they exist and demand recognition that we as a new and free South African nation in the making, have enshrined them within our first democratic Constitution. This proves our commitment. It proves our determination, and it proves our inherent dignity as human beings.

On this day, as we take time out from the ordinary routine to gather and celebrate Human Rights Day 2001, let us not keep our focus on what has gone before. The desire to leave our past behind has become the springboard from which we have launched ourselves into seeking a new national culture. Let us forge ahead with this task, seeing clearly the vision of a developed, prosperous, free South Africa before us. Our first step is to recognise the pre-eminent existence of human rights. Every subsequent step will be lighter and easier to take because we know this

truth.

We must also recognise that rights are never entrenched once and forever. We must be vigilant to ensure that government does not abridge or limit them. As government is required to fulfil some of the human rights entrenched in our

Constitution, it is also true that government can breach such rights, which remains the greatest threat to any declaration of rights. Therefore, we must remain vigilant to provide the necessary checks and balances to ensure that human rights are never violated and that their list, scope and extent is always increased to adjust to the changing needs of our rapidly evolving society. We must remain vigilant, proactive and militant in defending this relatively short season which, after centuries and centuries of struggle, has now blessed mankind with the benefits of human rights. We do this to ensure that we will never see the twilight of this human

rights season.

May truth continue to be our guide so that we may walk directly into the new challenge of development, development, and development, without the heavy baggage of our past to slow us. As we put our baggage down, our hands are freed to build together a new foundation for a prosperous country. On Human Rights Day 2001, I challenge all of us to free our hands from the baggage of the past and put them towards the development of our future.