

WMP/201/2010/2

ANC Speaker's Guidelines for Freedom Day

27 April 1997

Introduction

April 27 was immortalised in South African history, when in 1994 all South Africans, both black and white, went for the first time to the polling stations and voted for the organisation of their choice. The overwhelming majority of people voted for the ANC, because the ANC was and still remains the only organisation that is able to take this country forward and create a better life for all its citizens.

It was on April 27 that we proclaimed our freedom to the world. It was on that day that we demolished one of the cornerstones of apartheid and with pride claimed our South Africanness.

Our new constitution has given April 27 formal status as a public holiday and this day has been baptised as Freedom Day.

The importance of April 27

Freedom can only be known and measured if we have ever lived in a state of unfreedom - or in a state of not being free. Gaining our freedom is therefore a victory that must never be taken for granted.

We must love and embrace our freedom and fight always to maintain it through invoking the memory of what it was like not to be free. We must teach our children and our grandchildren of that past so they too can understand the significance of the day when we became free citizens of one united country.

We must remember those heroes who lived and died so that we could be free. We must remember Dr. Xuma, Moses Kotane, Yusuf Dadoo. We must remember Ruth First, Chris Hani and Lillian Ngoyi. We must remember Mathew Goniwe, Solomon Mahlangu and Joe Slovo. We must remember with pride the fallen heroes of our struggle. Let their memory serve always to move us forward.

What we have achieved - a foundation has been laid

But political freedom is not all that we have fought for. We have fought for the reconstruction and development of our country's economy. Our struggle is to ensure that the basic needs of our people are met.

We have come a long way in achieving our goals. In the last three years since the ANC assumed the reigns of government, a strong foundation has been laid to democratise our country in all its spheres.

We cannot question the gains that have been made - from the creation of our new constitution, through the food security and nutrition programmes, to the provision of electricity, water and housing to a large number of people previously dispossessed. *(For further detail, see notes from President Mandela's speech at the end)*

{Add in development that has occurred in the area that you are visiting, in the province that you are visiting, or information about the area of work in which you are involved}

Much still needs to be done

While the ANC and the people of our country can claim many victories in how far we have progressed in so short a time, we are all aware that much still needs to be achieved.

Together, we must work hard to develop our areas. In order to reach the heights of our revolutionary agenda, the government cannot work alone. Vibrant and organised communities are a necessary part of the democracy that we are consolidating.

The participation of all the people and organisations in our country *{and in name of area}* is central to deepening and defending the democratic gains that we made in 1994. Your participation is critical to taking this country forward.

Conclusion

Last month, the ANC at all levels of organisation and in the government came to report back to the people of our country. This process of reporting back and engaging with the people of this country is the practice of the ANC.

It is part of the participatory democracy that we are trying to foster. It is also an essential part of the freedom for which we have fought.

On this Freedom Day and on all our commemorative days to come, we must pledge to continue the programme of reconstructing our country. On this Freedom Day we must loudly proclaim that we shall always be free. We must let the whole world know that the atrocities and human rights abuses of the past that are being revealed at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will never happen again.

Today, marking the third year of our freedom, let us reassert our commitment to freedom and to the building of a strong, solid, united and free South Africa.

Additional notes from President Mandela's opening of Parliament speech

- To improve the food security and nutrition of at least the most indigent of the population, projects which amount to R400 million and reaching over a million people were undertaken last year. The Primary School Nutrition Programme now benefits more than 3 million children. Programmes to develop new farming entrepreneurs, to return land to communities and resettle others, and to start tenure reform are starting to change the face of our countryside.
- Over 700 000 people have already been supplied with water, and projects are under way which will affect over six million citizens.
- After two years of preparing the ground, the national housing policy is now fully operational. Today, more houses are in production than at any other time in South Africa's history. Millions now enjoy the benefits of electricity.
- Arguably, nowhere else is the fact of democratic transformation felt more keenly than in the area of universal access to health facilities. The building of clinics and hospitals, the immunisation programme and the beginnings of a new drugs policy - all these and more are practical and new qualitative steps that have transformed the majority of South Africans from being neglected outcasts into beneficiaries of a compassionate health policy.
- For the first time in South Africa's history, citizens are starting to benefit from integrated human resource development represented by a non-racial education system, life skills training, financial support to students in tertiary institutions, supply side measures in industry to promote training and a sports programme based not only on the promotion of healthy life styles, but also on constructing facilities in areas that were hitherto neglected.
- With the estimated three percent growth in the economy last year, the South African economy has turned the corner towards consistent expansion.
- There are many mega projects with investments of more than half a billion rand each. There has been a phenomenal growth in fixed investments and improved capacity utilisation in industry.