



"Democracy means freedom to choose"

INKATHA

Inkatha Freedom Party
IQembu leNkatha Yenkululeko

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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT

MONDAY, 05 FEBRUARY 2007

DURBAN

The year has begun once again with all kinds of demands that we should meet as people that our membership looks up to for guidance, and as people they regard as their role models. I know that some of these demands are odious, but there is nothing that one can do about them.

We are saddened by events of last week. Even before Mr David Rattray was buried our leader at Lindelani Mr Mgege was killed. I was shocked to receive a phone call from our National Chairperson informing me that Mr Mgege was apparently sitting outside his House in Lindelani with his wife, and when his wife went to the house, a shot was fired immediately leaving Mr Mgege stone dead. It is clear that anyone of us who believes that none of us here is likely to die through an assassin's bullet, *is living in the fool's paradise*. A night before the funeral of Mr David Rattray, another prominent South African Mr Alan Mackenzie was shot prompting the Director of the National Prosecuting Authority, Advocate Vusi Pikoli to say publicly that *"NO ONE IS SAFE"*. This was interesting as there were sickening statements by many government spokespersons in denial about crime and trying to play down the rising levels of crime in SOUTH AFRICA. They were all suggesting that all the outrages on crime were made merely because a high profile public figure Mr David Rattray had been assassinated. One just wonders just for how long this denial on crime will be going on in government circles. Even the speech by the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal at the funeral service of Mr Rattray, had a ring of denial as if something is being done to tackle the level of crime in the Country. But some of the SMS messages and surveys indicated that South Africans are concerned about the rising levels of crime. I remember that one such SMS poll in the newspaper indicated that more than 98 percent of those who responded were people who are convinced that there are unacceptable levels of criminality in our Country. And there have been articles and letters to Editors' Columns in the newspapers condemning the recent utterances of the President that *crime is not out of hand*. Mr Tony Leon's on-line letter on Friday was also about this. Only God knows where all this syndrome of denial is going to end, whether it is on the HIV/AIDS pandemic or CRIME.

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The other sad thing that has happened again this past week is the passing away of Mrs Adelaide Tambo, a prominent leader of the liberation struggle. Both my wife and I respected Mrs Tambo to the end, because even though her husband to whom I was very close for decades finally turned against me, she never changed her attitude towards me. At least not in public. Something I cannot say about her two colleagues in the ANC Women's League Mrs Nomzamo Mandela and Mrs Albertina Sisulu. Not that I nurse any grudges against these two sisters of ours, but I am just stating the facts of the matter; and giving credit where credit is due.

I almost apologised for non-attendance at this meeting of the NEC. I was in CAPE TOWN from Friday in order to attend the 70th Birthday Dinner of a friend of the family of many decades. I intended returning on Sunday in order to attend this meeting today. But I then received a message to the effect that the President would be sending me an invitation to attend the State Banquet for the President of the Republic of China Mr Hu in CAPE TOWN on Tuesday. This is when I felt that I could excuse myself with justification from today's meeting. But I feel very strongly that we are really lagging far behind where we should be, in preparing ourselves for the 2009 General Election. And what is more all the things that were obstacles to our success during the 2006 Local Government Elections, do not seem to want to go away. As each day and week passes, with these things remaining unresolved, I feel extremely concerned about any chances that we may have to regain the electoral ground that we lost in 2004 and 2006. It is this anxiety which has made me to be here today, as I feel that I would not be happy if there was any issue on the agenda which needs to be dealt with which is not dealt with because it needs my presence. Time is going too fast for my liking. I know of course that in the past whenever I tried to sound warning bells about election days drawing closer and closer before we are ready, it did not bother the majority of our leaders which is why we lost so badly in 2004 and 2006. I do believe that we as this collective around this table should not blame ourselves for whatever further electoral failures may be in store for us, on account of the fact that we failed to do our utmost to prepare the Party for the election that is taking place in 2009 and for all the by-elections that we seem to be losing. I find it most depressing to me that the tendency to want me to visit various parts of the Country as a substitute for other leaders leading and mobilising the people for the Party, is still very alive. I really do not know how I can instil that vigour and determination in our leaders to work unceasingly for our victory in the 2009 elections. And of course at the same time, it is demoralising for our members to hear some of our prominent leaders uttering the kind of statements that are alleged to have been made by a Member of the Legislature in Gauteng predicting the death of our Party when I do retire. I just cannot see how we can have to do any better, if people who are supposed to lead with the rest of us, speak this kind of language. If such an attitude exists what can prevent such members from crossing the floor when the so-called 'WINDOW-OF-OPPORTUNITY' is opened in a few months' time?

If there are any things which the CORE GROUP suggests should be done by the rest of us, I am certain that we will learn about them when the Chairperson or

the Secretary-General or both of them report about some of the outcomes of the meetings that the CORE-GROUP may have had since the last report was laid before us ahead of the Workshop that we all attended at the STRAND last month.

I received an invitation from Mr Funde, the Chairperson of the SABC Board to attend a meeting that they are holding in JOHANNESBURG today. I thought that these people think of themselves as the next thing to the Almighty in just summoning me at such short notice, not even knowing where I will be on such a date. I decided to ask Ms Sue Vos to represent me and the Party at such a meeting as I was concerned about further depleting our attendance at today's NEC by asking a member of the NEC to attend that SABC meeting. The things that seem to be going on at the SABC are not reassuring when one sees prominent and able journalists such as Mr John Perlman resigning from the SABC.

We had a very good discussion in the Executive Committee meeting of the House of Traditional Leaders that took place on Wednesday in ULUNDI. It really gave me a bit of hope to learn that some of the Amakhosi in some of the district Local Houses of Traditional Leaders were in fact moving in trying to set up these houses and that assistance is being given by some of our Municipal Mayors. That discussion in the EXCO meeting of the House of Traditional Leaders took place because I shared with members of that Executive that our National Chairperson in her capacity as our Mayor had shown remarkable eagerness to be of assistance to us in the Zululand District Local House of Traditional Leaders. We however cautioned that we should nevertheless be cautious as IFP members, not to get the Department of Traditional Affairs off the hook just so easily by over-burdening our Municipalities with some of the things which the Department of Traditional Affairs should be doing to set-up these Houses and to finance them. I am hoping again to distribute photocopies of another article from the publication known as 'NOSEWEEK' which tells another sad tale of the corruption that is taking place in the Eastern Cape ANC-led Provincial government. It must be remembered that just now a former MEC in the Eastern Cape Mr Mamase and his wife are appearing in a case of corruption involving millions of taxpayers' money. The ANC is fortunate in that even where there are numerous of these instances of embezzlement of the taxpayers' money that they still get overwhelming electoral support during elections. Or is because we as Opposition Parties are not taking enough advantage to expose these misdemeanours of the ANC-led Administrations, whether it is Provincial government or Municipal government. It is not that there is not enough ammunition to fire at the ruling Party to expose so many blatant cases of corruption.

On the eve of Mr Rattray's funeral I contacted His Majesty the King by phone to raise a couple of issues with him. One of these issues was Mr David Rattray's funeral. I had heard that the King had just returned from BRUSSELS with the Premier. This was the same trip that the Premier had offered to me in February last year and again later when we met in September in ULUNDI and which I twice decided not to undertake for reasons well-known to us here. I did ask His Majesty after we had talked about the late Mr Rattray at great

length whether I can also convey his condolences since I was attending the funeral service. The King then asked me to do so. However a strange thing took place at the funeral service because Premier Ndebele spoke before me and expressed condolences on behalf of the King claiming also to have been asked by the King to do so. I spoke later and I could not expunge the part of my remarks where I was to express condolences on behalf of the King. I found this passing of the King's message of condolences by two speakers each one claiming to have been mandated by the King to do so, rather odd to say the least. But at the same time it is of course not surprising when we think how the King has over the years been getting closer and closer to the ruling Party by distancing himself from me as his Prime Minister. But I would hate to be involved in this kind of exercise in ambivalence anytime in the future.

I have already hinted about the way we are losing by-elections. I think to me this is worse than what the so-called analysts and surveys by pollsters convey when they say that the IFP is losing support or *has* lost support. Our losing support in municipal by-elections is the worst barometer for judging that the Party is losing support or that it has lost support. It is indisputable evidence that indeed we are losing support or that we have lost support. If this is a fact do we have a programme of countering that declining support in by-elections? If it is there, what is it that we are doing to counter it? It is certainly not enough for us to merely shake our heads or just moan each time we lose a by-election. By-elections are on-going and I think if it becomes an acceptable trend that we are losing each time there is a by-election, nothing can demoralise members of our Party more than this kind of trend. To be quite frank, I am personally extremely distressed about EZINQOLENI. What was reported to us here that even the leadership of the Party at Ogwini has thrown in the towel as far as any possibility of us regaining the seat if Mr Mpisi resigns riled me. To me this is the worst demonstration of a political malaise in the Party which prompts me to ask myself the question what am I still doing here if the leadership of the Party admits defeat even before any efforts are mounted to ensure that we do not lose the seat particularly in an area where even Inkosi of the area is a staunch member of our Party. I cannot understand. That is why this strengthens the feeling that may be those who insist on my retirement are right for as a leader in all these years I had the benefit of strong branches and support structures throughout this Province at least. I am not making a threat to step down but I feel that I must take this collective the NEC into my confidence to expose to them how much my enthusiasm as the leader is dampened by the loss of the by-elections and by the verdict of the Ogwini IFP leadership on the Ezinqoleni Constituency.

I feel that it would be wrong for me to bottle up these strong feelings within me which are engendered by the situation where I find that our leaders are not having a well considered strategy to counter the loss of by-elections by the Party and the verdict beforehand that we will not win Ezinqoleni if Mr Mpisi resigns or is expelled. I frankly do not see how it really helps us to accept these things and to fold up our arms without working on a strategy to counter such on-going decline. If we do not do something about it ourselves as the NEC who else will do something about it? I think you can imagine my

depression and sleepless nights when I feel that I am leading a wagon which is daily going down and down. What can I as a leader do except to point the direction I think the Party must take. That is my only job. But as the English saying goes: *"YOU CAN TAKE THE HORSE TO THE RIVER BUT YOU CANNOT FORCE HIM TO DRINK"*.

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