

STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS  
ON THE PROPOSED CONVOCAION OF A NATIONAL CONVENTION  
IN SOUTH AFRICA

Recently, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, head of the Zulu Tribal Territorial Authority, issued a call for a National Convention of all races in South Africa. This idea is being supported by the United Party, the Progressive Party, the Trade Union Council of South Africa, and other organisations. However, even this very tentative move has been firmly rejected by the ruling, fascist, all-white Nationalist Government.

A National Convention has always been necessary in South Africa, where a White minority group illegally monopolises power to defend and advance its interests of oppression and exploitation.

During its long history of relentless struggle, the African National Congress - the vanguard organisation of the national liberation movement in our country - has continually demanded the convocation of a genuine National Convention, representative of all the people, to discuss and draw up a truly democratic constitution in which political and economic power would

be controlled by and vested in the overwhelming majority, the African people. There could be no other meaningful, realistic convention or political dialogue.

Yet the fascist Nationalist Government rejected a National Convention on any basis. It would rather use all tricks to woo the Bandas, the Boignys and company into the trap of dialogue which is good for the White racists

because it serves to entrench White domination and exploitation and to extend this domination and exploitation to the whole of the African continent.

In 1961, when, for the last time, the oppressed people, led by the ANC, made a call for a National Convention in place of a Whites-only Republic, the fascist regime replied with the most unprecedented mobilisation of the oppressor army in an attempt

to crush the national stoppage of work which we called in reply to the enemy's refusal to summon a national convention.

Our call was answered with the most ruthless forms of legalised, police and military terrorism. Political organisations were banned: the leaders of the people were arrested, tortured and restricted. The white minority regime declared open war against an unarmed people. This marked

the close of a chapter in the history of our struggle for freedom and justice. The peaceful avenues of struggle were closed, and severe penal-

ties, up to the death sentence, were imposed. In these circumstances, the African National Congress, was compelled to lead the oppressed people in a violent offensive against a violent repression. Armed repression could only be met by armed revolt.

The persistence of the ruling Nationalist Government, with and on behalf of the whole of White South Africa, in enforcing the apartheid system with militarism, forced upon us the present phase of our struggle, armed struggle.

Yet, White organisations and individuals that have supported and continue to support the perpetuation of White rule - the United Party, the Progressive Party and the Trade Union Council of South Africa - now want a National Convention. Why?

These White, anti-Black groups see with the greatest fear that the liberation of the Black man is approaching. They see by the actions of the

Black people of our country that their hatred of the White oppressor and their determination to seize political power, relying on their own strength, have increased double-fold, despite and because of the iron heel of mass

arrests, torture, indefinite detention and murder of patriots. They see that the ANC, the oppressed and exploited people, are not shaken in their resolve to prosecute the armed struggle up to victory.

They see that the progressive peoples the world over are more than ever determined to isolate apartheid South Africa, politically, economically, culturally, in all spheres of life, and are prepared to grab at anything to save themselves from total isolation.

They realise that the South African economy itself is threatened with collapse as a result of the apartheid policy of the super-exploitation

of the Black workers.

They recognise all this and they realise that they have to devise new methods of continuing the system of White rule and Black exploitation

3/...

and. for deceiving the international community.

They are not friends of the Black people, interested in transferring political power to the Black, oppressed majority. They are wolves who have cloaked themselves in the skin of a national convention to deceive the indigenous people and divert them from prosecuting the struggle by arms and other means, for the eventual seizure of political power.

The African National Congress says to these organisations that they cannot stem the tide of history; they should concentrate their efforts on the White minority regime and the White population.

The African National Congress declares that the only genuine national convention that can be held in South Africa would:

- \* be vested with sovereign and unlimited authority to change South African society in all its aspects;
- \* be attended by representatives of all the national groups in proportions that reflect the composition of the South African population.

Moreover, for such a convention to be genuinely sovereign and democratic, the African National Congress declares that the following pre-conditions would have to be met:

- \* The suspension of the racist constitution;
- \* The lifting of the ban on the vanguard organisation, the ANC, and all other popular organisations;
- \* The release of all political prisoners and banned, banished and restricted patriots and the full participation of the people's leaders like Nelson Mandela and others, in the preparations for and actual work of the convention;
- \* Immediate and unconditional return of all political exiles;
- \* Immediate, complete and unconditional compliance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- \* The immediate and unequivocal repeal of the Land Act;
- \* The immediate repeal of all repressive legislation such as the Suppression of Communism Act, the Terrorism Act, Proclamation 400 in the Transkei, and all other such legislation:
- \* The disarming of the police and army and disbanding of the existing

machinery of police and military terrorism.

The Vorster regime is as yet not prepared to meet these demands. It still believes that it is invincible and can command and herd history according to its will. It is only from a position of strength, when the Black people's war of liberation seriously threatens the White minority regime that the Nationalist Government will be obliged and ready to talk,

4/â€¢ â€¢ â€¢

and for deceiving the international community.

They are not friends of the Black people, interested in transferring political power to the Black, oppressed majority. They are wolves who have cloaked themselves in the skin of a national convention to deceive the indigenous people and divert them from prosecuting the struggle by arms and other means, for the eventual seizure of political power.

The African National Congress says to these organisations that they cannot stem the tide of history; they should concentrate their efforts on the White minority regime and the White population.

The African National Congress declares that the only genuine national convention that can be held in South Africa would:

- \* be vested with sovereign and unlimited authority to change South African society in all its aspects;
- \* be attended by representatives of all the national groups in proportions that reflect the composition of the South African population.

Moreover, for such a convention to be genuinely sovereign and democratic, the African National Congress declares that the following pre-conditions would have to be met:

- \* The suspension of the racist constitution;
- \* The lifting of the ban on the vanguard organisation, the ANC, and all other popular organisations;
- \* The release of all political prisoners and banned, banished and restricted patriots and the full participation of the people's leaders like Nelson Mandela and others, in the preparations for and actual work of the convention;
- \* Immediate and unconditional return of all political exiles;
- \* Immediate, complete and unconditional compliance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- \* The immediate and unequivocal repeal of the Land Act;
- \* The immediate repeal of all repressive legislation such as the Suppression of Communism Act, the Terrorism Act, Proclamation 400 in the Transkei, and all other such legislation:
- \* The disarming of the police and army and disbanding of the existing

machinery of police and military terrorism.

The Vorster regime is as yet not prepared to meet these demands. It still believes that it is invincible and can command and herd history according to its will. It is only from a position of strength, when the Black people's war of liberation seriously threatens the White minority regime that the Nationalist Government will be obliged and ready to talk.

4/...

The main direction towards change, the content of the political struggle of the indigenous and oppressed masses in our country is through an armed struggle which the ANC has already launched and will continue to prosecute with increasing vigour.

To the Hack, oppressed peoples of South Africa, the African National Congress says it is our bounden duty to build up the greatest unity among ourselves, to support the armed struggle and to use every method of resistance and revolt to seize political power from the White minority, fascist regime.

LONG LIVE THE BLACK REVOLUTION\*  
AMANDLAJ MAATLAJ