



"Democracy means freedom to choose"

INKATHA

Inkatha Freedom Party
IQembu leNkatha Yenkululeko

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

ENYANDENI, EASTERN CAPE : 10th APRIL, 2004

There are a few hours left to a day in a time, which we shall all remember in many years to come. I often wonder what April 14, 2004 will be remembered for in twenty years. In its election campaign, the ANC has tried to focus attention on the past and has emphasized the fact that we will soon be celebrating the tenth anniversary of our liberation. However, April 14 comes before April 27, and before we celebrate the anniversary of our liberation, I feel that it is incumbent upon us to think about not the past, but the future. This is a time in which South African people must think about the future, because the present has very serious problems, which can only be solved if, on April 14, we turn the country around and set in on a new course.

I would hope that when in twenty years we look back on April 14, 2004, we can indeed remember the next elections as the time of a new beginning, in which South Africa put itself on a new course, which finally succeeded in solving its many problems. In fact, I feel that there is hope because the present elections has focused attention on the real issues of South Africa, which are those of HIV/Aids, corruption, crime, unemployment and poverty. For the first time in our history all the people of South Africa have made a major contribution in shaping the electoral debate. The election campaign this time around has not been about the euphoria of liberation. The people themselves have chosen the issues. I have walked the breadth and length of South Africa, and have heard people expressing the same concerns about the same list of issues which are HIV/Aids, corruption, crime, unemployment and poverty. In fact, these issues do affect all of us in one way or the other. The spread of HIV/Aids has been so massive, that it is no exaggeration to say that today we are either all infected by HIV/Aids or affected by it, directly or indirectly.

Today we live in a situation in which each South African has been a victim of crime or lives in the fear of becoming one. Our country has experienced ever growing unemployment since 1994, which has hit people in this area especially hard. Unemployment has grown from 29% - 40% since 1994. Corruption has been escalating

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DURBAN OFFICE:
2 Durban Club Place,
Durban, 4001.

President: The Hon. Prince Mangosuthu G. Buthelezi
National Chairman: Mr LPHM Mtshali

ULUNDI OFFICE:
Private Bag 9
Ulundi 3838

and has insinuated its ugly face, not only in all levels of our government, but also in civil society. We know very well that in regions such as this one, poverty has increased in rural areas and the long awaited development in rural areas has not arrived. I was attacked in Parliament for having pointed out that poverty in rural areas has in fact increased since 1994, because of the collapse of subsistence agriculture and food security, and because of the Government's policies which have undermined traditional leadership. These are the issues which people across the country have identified as those on which the next elections must be held. These are the issues on which the South African people must give guidance on April 14, 2004, making their voice heard to give South Africa the option of a new beginning.

However, as I speak to you in this region and in this important place, which has such great significance for me, I need to point to another issue. You know that over the years I have come here to this great place, to maintain a longstanding dialogue with the Monarchy of Transkei and the traditional leadership of this area. The issue of traditional leadership is crucial to the future of our country. However, it has not been turned into an electoral issue. That does not mean that it is not an issue which should not be heard, voiced and ironed out through the result of the elections. For the past ten years the ANC Government has pursued a systematic plan of obliteration of the powers and functions of traditional leaders. The local government reform has obliterated all the powers that traditional leaders had, in respect of local government matters. I have been the only one who has been protecting the powers and functions of traditional leaders, in an open and vociferous manner. I stuck my neck out, over and again, in Cabinet and in Parliament. It is a fact of history that the Communal Land Rights Act was amended at the last moment, because of my insistence that the role of traditional leadership in the administration of communal land, should not be undermined. For ten years I pointed out what the Government has been doing to systematically reduce the power of traditional leadership. Whenever I go to conferences of traditional leadership, all my colleague traditional leaders come to me, and compliment me for my stance, strength and outspoken defense of traditional leadership. However, whenever election time comes, all my colleague traditional leaders express no type of support for me and my Party.

We must begin to realise that the issue of traditional leadership can only be solved at the political level. It is at the political level that the ANC has betrayed all the promises made to traditional leaders. It is at the political level that the ANC needs to be confronted and this can only be done by means of the electoral result. If at the next election the ANC is confirmed in power, and its size is not cut down by a major defeat at the polls, the ANC will continue to act in the same way it has in the past ten years. The next elections are really a referendum between having five more years of the same, or something better. This is particularly true for traditional leadership. Five more years of the same policies which undermine traditional leadership could be a disaster. Let us make no mistake. The National Framework for Traditional Leadership Act has not given anything to traditional leaders, but has in fact diminished our powers and functions, to

almost nothing. Traditional leaders per se have now no powers in terms of law. The only power is that which is given to traditional councils, which needs to be the product of an election, to fill at least 40% of their members in such fashion. However, nowhere have such traditional councils come into existence, or at this time can come into existence, because the provisions for such elections to be held have not been passed. They cannot be passed by means of regulations, because the Act does not provide for it. This is not an oversight. This is a clear way of paralyzing the institution of traditional leadership, by pushing it into a field in which it becomes increasingly beyond the law, and finally illegal.

A similar situation applies in respect of communal land. From a technical viewpoint, traditional councils may continue to administer our communal land. However, this power has now been taken away from traditional leaders to be placed into the hands of such traditional councils. However, the hard fact of the matter is that such traditional councils cannot come into existence, because they cannot be elected in terms of the provisions of the National Framework for Traditional Leadership Act. An artificial stalemate has been created which effectively only gives to the administrative structures, established through the Department of Land Affairs, the legal power to administer our land. Step by step, piece by piece, the power of traditional leadership is being eroded, and the same will continue for the next five years, unless at the next elections something is done to stop the ANC.

The voice of the South African people must be heard at the next elections. The voice of traditional leaders must be heard at the next elections. We have only one hundred hours to mobilise our people to make their voice heard. These are one hundred hours in which traditional leadership must face with the responsibility to history and to their own people. Traditional leaders are trying to cut deals behind the scenes in the hope of surviving. This is not how traditional leaders have fought their battles in the past. We are not people who creep behind rocks, and throw our spears from behind corners, without being seen. In our history traditional leaders have always marched ahead of our troops on the battle field. It is now the time for traditional leaders to become outspoken, and have the courage to come out openly to support political parties which have supported them. Bad governments are elected by good people who do not vote, or keep silent. This is particularly relevant to traditional leadership at the next elections. A new bad government will be elected by traditional leaders who do not call on their people to vote for a good government, and who also keep silent.

If traditional leaders want to have a good government, they must spend the next one hundred hours urging as many as possible of their subjects, to vote and to vote for a political party which has supported them. I do not believe that any other political party more than mine, has supported the cause of traditional leadership in South Africa. We have one hundred days to add the issue of traditional leadership to the list of those which have formed part of this electoral campaign. This is the time of do or die for traditional leadership. Only political solutions can ensure the survival of traditional

leadership. As it now stands, traditional leadership has been placed in a position of being doomed. I have done my best to avoid this but I have been constantly alone when push comes to shove.

It is now the time to transform all the accolades, compliments and expression of support and admiration, which traditional leaders from this area, and indeed from throughout South Africa, always paid to me in private, into public statements which are heard around the land. If in the next one hundred days traditional leaders were to speak with a unified voice, at least for one time in our history, then the future of South Africa could indeed be changed. This is perhaps the first time in our history that traditional leaders really have the power to shape the future of our country. I hope that traditional leaders will not lose this power by refusing to use it on this important occasion.

I have maintained a longstanding dialogue with the people of this region and its traditional leadership. I am a known quantity to all of you. You have tested my good faith, integrity and honesty, over and again. It is against this background that I need to speak to you as a man does to a man, as a traditional leader does to a traditional leader and as a South African does to a South Africa. I am not going to mince my words. Unless traditional leaders come out in force in the next one hundred hours, the institution of traditional leadership will have reached its end in our country, and will be relegated to ceremonial functions with no significant power to govern our communities. We must decide now whether we will accept traditional leadership to become a ceremonial institution, or whether we wish it to have a significant role in the governance and development of our communities.

As it stands now, we can just forget about ever exercising again a significant role in the governance and development of our communities, unless, I say unless in the next one hundred hours, everyone goes out with unprecedented efforts and dynamic energies to mobilise people in rural areas, to tell them to vote for my Party. I am not saying that because my Party should be the best. I believe that my Party happens to be the best but I do not want them to vote for me because of that belief, if they do not share it. They need to vote for me because, whether they like it or not, my Party is the only viable party contending elections, which has taken a clear stand in favour of traditional leadership and will continue to have the opportunity and the power to do something for traditional leadership. There is just no other way for the people of South Africa to make their voice heard in favour of traditional leadership, if they wish to do so.

The next election has the opportunity to rectify the mistakes made in the past ten years and ensure that they will not continue to bedevil our future. I do not want to bequeath on our children and our grandchildren, a future which remains characterized by the problems of HIV/Aids, corruption, crime, unemployment and poverty. I do not wish these problems to the remain part and parcel of South Africa, as if they were an ordinary feature of our society. I dream of a society in which problems of this nature disappear. I know that a dream of this nature seems to be bigger than our present

horizons. However, we have always dreamt dreams which are larger than our present horizons.

Thirty years ago we dreamt of a country in which apartheid, oppression and racism would be nothing but bad memories of a distant past. We have now realised that dream. Therefore, we need to dream of a similarly large dream, which makes us believe that one day, in the not too distant future, the problems of HIV/Aids, corruption, crime, unemployment and poverty may be regarded as bad memories of a distant past. However, we also need to succeed in the challenge of creating a truly modern and truly African state. As it stands now, in the South African context, we will not produce a truly African state. The undermining of traditional leadership will make our state lose some of its most important African features, and the next one hundred hours are the last opportunity to place our country on a new path, out of which a truly modern and truly African state may be generated.

For ten years, we have been talking about an African Renaissance and the formation of a truly African state, which embraces modernity without destroying the features and characteristics of our being African. There has been a lot of lip service paid to this notion. It is now the time to make the voice of the South African people heard to determine whether this notion is to survive, or whether it is to perish forever. The next elections are indeed the time to do or die, also for this type of institutional development. There is much more I would wish to say but I feel that in light of what I have said, nothing else seems as important and relevant. I have come here not only to speak but to listen. On this occasion I would like to hear what the people of this region will do to make sure that through their vote, the problems of HIV/Aids, corruption, crime, unemployment and poverty will be solved and to give a new chance for the issues of traditional leadership to be carried forward.

I have done my part. It is now for the South African people to do their part. I have said what I have to say. It is now for those who are convened here to tell me what you will do on your part. There are only one hundred days left. I am ready to lead a new charge on behalf of all the things we share and hold dear. I am willing to commit myself to five more years of struggle to eliminate the problems of HIV/Aids, corruption, crime, unemployment and poverty and to protect traditional leadership. I have done my part and I will continue to do my part. I have made my commitment. I think that it is time for the people of this region to make their commitment, and tell South Africa what he or she will do in the next one hundred hours.

Now is the time for ordinary people and leaders alike to make their contribution. Now is the time of the people. May God inspire the people to do what is right. May God give strength to the people to do what is expected of them. May God assist the people as they find the courage to hope for a better future. May God bless all of you. May God bless South Africa.

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