

Histe I

Olivel Reginald Tambo was born in Mbizana in eastern P0nd0land in the Cape

P1011nr1e 011 27 October 1917 He attended Ludeke Methodist School, and completed his pllmry education at. Holy Cross Mission near Flagstaff From there he transferred to St. Peterâ\200\231 s Secondaly Sehoel'ln Johannesburg After eompletillg his secondary educati on

Tambo went to the U111Velsity C0llege of Fort Hareln Alice and earned a Bachelor of Science degree 111 1941. He remained at Fort Hare to quahfy for an honours degree but was expeied 1111 942 c111lling a student st11llke ever demands for a demeeratiaei~\202y el eeted

student representative eoulieil.Feâ\200\2301ewmg his expl1113.1011 he letu11lled to St. Pet elâ\200\231 s in

Johannesburg as a science and mathematics teacher.

111 Johannesburg lTambo became ihvolved with a group of young leaders who

advocated a more radieal direction for the ANC. Working with Nelson Mandela, Walter Si-sulu, Anton Lembede, Ashby Mda, W11lliam Neomo, C.M. Majombozi, and others, Tambo became a founding member of the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) in 1944. He served as the Youth Leagueâ\200\231s national secretary and was elected president of the Transvaal in 1948 and 11ational Vlee~plesldent 111 1949.

Tambo moved quickly into a position of inĩ~\202uence 111 the senior ANC and was

elected to the Transvaal Executive 01' the ANC. 111 1948, aâ\200\230ieng with Walter Sis1 llu,he

was elected tothe National Exeeutl'Ve Committee. Tambe was 21130 a 11le1111hel ef the committee that drew up the Plogla111me of Actit'111111 1948,1N1hle helpel meve the ANC from a passive 0lgallizati en charged with catering to the elite, to one which 11101111121 311 the

people for massive eampalg11s of 011/11 disobedience and 11011â\200\224â\200\224V10lent r esistance.

Tambe lett teaching111 1947 and took up law. With the support of Waiter 8111111111 he

was articled'111 a Jehannesburg law 111111.

that year he established a 121W practice with Nelson Mandela. Theh legal practice championed underprivileged Victims of apartheid laws.

111 1952 he qualiĩ~\201ed as an attorney, and later

Pressure and banning orders from the South African government forced Sisulu to

resign from ANC leadership leading to Tamboâ\200\231s appointment as acting seeretary-gen eral

in 1954. AlthOUGH banned himself and restricted to Johannesburg, Tambe was allowed to retain his leadelshp position in the ANC. During this period. he helped to guide the ANC through the Deĩ~\201ance Campaigns and the difi~\201euh campalg11s against the Western ar ea

removal and the introduction of Bantu Education. 111 December 1956, he was arrested and ehalged with treason. He was among those discharged from the Treason Trial in late 1957. 111 1958, with Albert Luthuh lselated by bans restricting him to his Natal home,

Tambo was eleeted to 1111 the 11ewly created post of deputy plesidelt~general 0f the ANC

. 111 1959 Tamhe ~was banned'and was 101biddellt0 attend gathell111gs for i~\201ve years.

Fellewihgthe Sharpevihe Massacre of 1960, ANC leadel's were convinced a

banning of the ANC was imminent and made plal113 fer Tambe to leave the country to serve as a foreign spokesman and to estabhsh external missions and mobilize intemationai support agall1st the apartheid system.

F1111111 the harming 01' the ANC and PAC (Pan At'rieanist Congress) 1111 1960 until the

unbanniHg 0f the ANC in 1990, Tamho led the ANCâ\200\231 s organizati en in exile, living in

London,Tanzall1a, and 2111111121111ve 111 conjunction with Yusuf Dadeo he was instrumentall11 the establ1shmeht 0f the Seuth African United1110111 (SAUF) which brought together the ANC external missions, the PAC lâ\200\234Pan Af11leanist Congress), t

he

South African 1110111111 1C011,1,1essalld the South West African National Union (SWANU).  
T111011g11 sueeess11111 lobbyng the SAUF brought about the expulsion bf South Africa frem

CÃ©liver Tambo \_ \_ 1

the C0111111011wealth111 1961. F0110w111g its 111111211 success the SAUF broke up 111 Jul  
Y  
1961.

Aided by various African governments, Tambo established ANC missions in  
Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, and London. Eventually the ANC operated 11113310113 111  
27  
countries by 1990. Countries hosting 11113810113 11101ude<1 all permanent members of the  
United Nations Security Council with the exception of 111111121.

When the ANC moved to armed struggle 111111 activated Umkhonto we Sizwe

1211111101 was 11131111111lental111 securing the cooperation of numerous African governmen  
ts  
111' providing training and facilities for the ANC. Following Albert Luthe's death in  
1967 Tambo was named acting president-general. His appointment was approved by the  
Morogoro Conference 111 1969.

Throughout the 1970s Tambo's international prestige rose immensely as he

traveled the world promoting opposition to the apartheid system 111 1985 Tambo was  
reelected ANC president at the Kabwe conference 111 that role he served as head of the  
Political Military Council (PMC) of the ANC and as commander-in-chief of Umkhonto  
we Sizwe.

111 1989 121111110 suffered a stroke and spent several months 111 8100111101111

recuperating. He returned to South Africa 111 1991 and was elected 11311011211 chairperson  
at the ANC's first legal 112111011211 conference 111 July 1991 He was offered the posi  
tion of  
Chancellor at Fort Hare University 111 1991 Oliver Tambo died 111 24 April 1993.