



"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, 10 DECEMBER 2007

ULUNDI

We are still not a full house which I had hoped we would be today, in order for us to discuss some of the burning issues which I raised last week, which I felt needed the collective wisdom of a full NEC meeting. The Secretary-General is only expected to return today from his trip to Israel and I think that we should rather wait for a day when he, in particular, is around as our Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of Stratcom.

'It never rains but pours', goes an old English saying. It has been too much for us to have the verdict in the NADECO case, which favoured our opponents. I must confess that I have lately been as over-stressed as I was when we had such a set-back in both the 2004 general election and in the 2006 local government elections. What has happened in this court case together with the results of the By-election at UMHLATHUZE has really brought down my spirits and this is worsened by the way I see just how laid back our leaders are, in spite of it all. It looks to me as if we need to hold another National Council meeting early

in the New Year before Parliamentary sessions begin. Not that I think that there will be any better guidance from the full National Council meeting which is any better than the guidance one receives from around this table. I think that one is morally bound to have a National Council meeting since we are merely an Executive Committee of the National Council. Things are so bad and are not promising in the Party and we should not put ourselves into a disadvantageous position where, we may be accused of having deliberately not called meetings of National Council as have already happened as if we were usurping the powers of the National Council. Apart from that aspect I do not see why our Comrades in the National Council should not share the responsibility of what is happening in our Party, which is not just a responsibility of this Committee but in fact what is our joint-responsibility with the rest of them. Why must we be the ones who carry the can alone? It is just not right to do so, from whichever angle one looks at this question.

On the 6th and 7th of December I attended a Workshop called jointly by the Minister of Land Affairs and Agriculture Ms Xingwana and the MEC for Agriculture and Environmental Affairs Mr Mtholephi Mthimkhulu. I was invited to attend in my capacity as Chairperson of the Local House of Traditional leaders in the Zululand district. I was also afforded a 20 minute slot on the first day.

I thought that it went off very well. But Minister Xingwana never fails to put in a commercial for the ANC on such occasions. She stated that the African National Congress was set up to deal with the issue of land. The Conference was called '*The Zululand Land and Agrarian Indaba*'. I was asked to speak on '*The Role of Traditional leaders in Land Reform and Agriculture*'. Mr Senzo Mchunu was also one of the leading figures at the Conference in his capacity, as Chairperson of the KZN Legislature Committee on Agriculture and Environmental Affairs. The last session was chaired by him and he was designated the Chairperson of the 7 Commissions that were set up to have group discussions on the theme of the Conference. His behaviour was typical of him on the first day of Conference; he did not greet me even when during the lunch hour he came to greet the Minister at the table where we were eating. Whatever the merits of the exercise, it was also meant as part and parcel of the ruling Party's programme to use the resources of the State to campaign already, for the 2009 elections. The Minister described the Conference as one of President Mbeki's projects, which targets the Zululand District, as one of the nodes which have a serious problem of Poverty.

I found it interesting that my mention that the Mayor of the Zululand Municipal district had given us 40 tractors, when this was not really her direct responsibility, Minister Xingwana reacted to this and said that it was her duty as Municipalities have a responsibility for economic development. When she said this I saw Inkosi Ntshangase applauding her response. Inkosi Ntshangase was Mr Mabuyakhulu's candidate for the position of Chairmanship of the local House of Traditional leaders in the Zululand district. He was one of those Amakhosi that Mr Mabuyakhulu took to Ghana prior to the elections for the Local House. And I of course heard from Minister Xingwana that she had been introduced to Inkosi Zondo, who she said MEC Mthimkhulu told her that he is a good farmer, who is now in the export trade.

As a result of the High Court decision on the NADECO case, Dr Jiyane phoned me wondering if the IFP can help to appeal against the decision. At the time he phoned me the Chairperson of the POC was already engaged in trying to get hold of our lawyers to note an appeal. He will brief the NEC on details of all that has happened. I am really amazed by the expectations of all these people such as Dr Jiyane and also Councillor Shunumugan who expect us to finance all this litigation. It is true that we are somehow in a cleft stick, since we as a Party have an interest in having the status quo to remain while the appeal is going on, regardless of whether we win or lose the appeal. The Chairperson of the POC pointed out to me the unfairness of their attitude since they are really the ones who will lose more when Judgement is implemented as they will be expelled and lose their positions as Councillors. It is hardly fair that they should expect the IFP to carry the burden of these litigation expenses alone. We are in a catch 22 situation, as a Party. My worry now is that at a time when we should be saving every cent and collecting every cent in readiness for the 2009 elections we are spending such large sums on the current NADECO situation – because of the Party's dependence on the NADECO Councillors in NEWCASTLE and UMHATHUZE. Politically speaking we do not have much choice. But if our leaders were working diligently in all these places to recruit members and to put the Party in a state of readiness for the 2009 election, I would not mind. But since there is just nothing happening it seems to me that we are doing no more than just postponing the pain of the realisation that when we lost in these places in 2004, and 2006, we have lost these places for good. To me this seems to be what we must face. Then I start asking myself whether it is worth our while to spend all these tens of thousands of Rands in the NADECO litigation.

I am not suggesting that we should abandon these efforts. I have already described this situation as a catch 22 situation.

I cannot think of saying anymore, as I stated last week, than that we should either be mobilised now as an electoral machine, or just accept that our enemies are right after all when they say that we are a dying Party. I say so even notwithstanding such positive signs such as the success of our annual general Conference in October and the success of the Youth Brigade Conference just this last week-end. I must not be misunderstood to be dragging my colleagues into my mood of pessimism. No. I am just interpreting what I see. If I am wrong it is for my colleagues to state why I am wrong in thinking as I do. I have a very open mind on this. But looking at what I see I feel that I have as the leader of this Party no reason to be optimistic. It must be understood that I feel as I do, because I do not find any reason to feel differently when all my suggestions as the leader of this Party are not taken seriously. I already have experienced a situation when I appealed regularly to the leaders of the IFP in 2004 and 2006 warning people to get off their butts and work and very few leaders heeded what I said. As a result we had the bad results that we got in the 2004 general election and in the 2006 local government elections. There is something axiomatic about that old adage which goes, 'Once bitten twice shy'.

My Comrades must put themselves in my shoes. I tried to step down precisely because there was *corridor talk* within the Party and by some in the media, including the so-called political analysts that I was the problem, and that the Party now needed a new leadership. I really beg you to understand that I think it is only the most responsible thing I can do for me to bare my thinking to you. I did not go on with my intention to step down in 2004 and 2006, because I thought that delegates were serious when they said with such unanimity that they still wanted me to continue to lead the Party. I really think that Colleagues must understand or tell me what they think I should do, when my lead is not followed by the Party leadership. I do not doubt that the run of the mill membership of the Party, still supports me. But if most leaders who are supposed to lead with me show no interest in doing so, I do not know what is left for me to do. I know that we around this table are doing our utmost in varying degrees to offer that lead, which can result in our electoral success. But quite clearly we alone here, cannot by ourselves be able to pull this IFP wagon from the quagmire where it is stuck and where it has been stuck since 2004 and 2006, and there is hardly anything that indicates as of now that it is likely to be moved out, in time for us to have our efforts crowned with success in 2009.

I think that while I am excited by the good work that the CORE GROUP has done and is doing, I do not think that even these beautiful plans they are working out for us, will result in any success, if there are no people who are prepared to implement them. Just this week Dr Böhler of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung has requested a meeting with me and some members of the Core Group to discuss some of the things that he thinks are important for us to go through, I am hoping that this may be possible on Friday the 14th of December, when I return from Cape town where I am attending Archbishop Ndungane's farewell dinner. I was hoping to go to Cape Town only next year like all other fellow MPs, but I could not disappoint the Archbishop who personally phoned me asking me whether I am attending his farewell dinner. He has really given the kind of pastoral care that I last had from some of his predecessors such as Archbishop Joost de Blank, Archbishop Selby Taylor, Bishop Alphaeus Zulu and Bishop Thomas Savage; and which I was never given by his immediate predecessor. I would not be appreciating what God has done for me during the Episcopacy of Archbishop Ndungane, if I do not show my appreciation of what

the Archbishop did for me while he was our Archbishop and Metropolitan. I must confess to you that while appreciating that God has been kind to give me the kind of health that I am enjoying at such a great age, I am really tired and my family is feeling the effects of my long absences from home even during this last month in the year.

And yet apart from the function at Kwamshayazafe and the dinner the same day, I still have to attend the King's First Fruits Ceremony on the 22nd of December 2007, just 3 days before Christmas. And it is normally a very strenuous day for me as we stand on our legs at the cattle byre at Enyokeni for hours on end – the whole day. I must admit to you my dear Comrades that I am really physically tired just now. This has nothing to do with the other matters which I raised today. I know that neither yourselves nor myself can do anything about it. But I am just crying out to you as colleagues with whom we are carrying the burden of leading the Party. It is no more than me thinking aloud about the state of my physical being. However it is the prospect of retiring ignominiously which I find difficult to come to terms with. Anyone who has tried as I have done to serve this Party and the people of this Country as I have tried to do, could feel exactly as I do at this moment in my lifetime.

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