



AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The ANC Statement on Local Government

The ANC Local Government Department held a consultative meeting in Johannesburg from 26 to 28 April 1992. The following Organisations were represented at the meeting: the ANC Womens League, ANC Departments, the SACP, Cosatu, the South African National Civics Organisation (SANCO), and the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU).

The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. develop a common strategy aimed at addressing the local government crisis, the unilateral restructuring of local authorities and the disruption of services within the black communities; and
2. formulate an urban and rural local government policy discussion document.

The meeting further noted that the ultimatum issued by Mr Leon Wessels, urging Local Authorities to create joint Administrations in terms of the widely rejected Interim Measures on Local Government Act by the end of the year or face penalty, has exacerbated the current crises at local level.

It was also noted that using the Act and other related Apartheid legislation as a framework for local negotiation has enabled unrepresentative White and Black local authorities to proceed with unilateral restructuring that could have long term detrimental effects on the future of a non-racial and democratic government.

Both Kimberley and Port Elizabeth are instructive examples. In Kimberley the white local authorities are proceeding with unilateral restructuring despite the concerns raised by the Civic Associations and the ANC in the region, while in Port Elizabeth 800 workers are to be retrenched as a

The People Shall Govern!

result of unilateral local government restructuring.

Therefore the meeting calls on the Government to sign a protocol agreement together with community and political organisations, including the civic associations and the trade unions, committing itself to :

1. the immediate withdrawal of the Interim Measures on Local Government Act;
2. the end to all unilateral restructuring at local level.
3. a moratorium on retrenchments of a proper and negotiated process of rationalization can be implemented;
4. The immediate establishment until a National Negotiations Forum to formulate a temporary legal framework to replace the Interim Measures Act

All the organisations which were represented at the meeting believe that the end to unilateral restructuring should lead to the immediate establishment of a National Negotiation Forum which will formulate a legal framework to replace the Interim Measures on Local Government Act.

It is proposed that the legal framework should have a clear non-racial, non-sexist and democratic vision, and it should provide guidelines for all local negotiating forums.

In line with the CODESA proposals the meeting urges both CODESA and the National Party Government to speedily create a multi-party commission on local government which will give legal effect to the proposals of the Negotiation Forum and to monitor unilateral restructuring at every level. The multi-party commission would have certain executive functions, which replace those currently held by the Provincial Administrators, to monitor the adherence of all local authorities to a set of guidelines of local negotiating principles.

The meeting adopted a programme of action in order to ensure that all the above demands are met by the Government. Each of the organisations represented at the meeting, will take this programme of action to their respective constituencies to examine practical ways of implementing it.