



# ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the  
**President**

## Our walk to freedom has been a long one and it is not yet complete

ADDRESS BY **MINISTER OF MINERAL AND PETROLEUM RESOURCES, GWEDE MANTASHE**,  
ON BEHALF OF **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**,  
**ON THE OCCASION OF FREEDOM DAY NATIONAL CELEBRATION**

 Our history may have been scarred by colonialism and apartheid, but ours is a history of courage, resilience and determination to prevail against considerable odds.

Thirty-one years ago, on this day, the eyes of the world were on South Africa.

Our first democratic elections were the most important story for every media house in the world.

Many were glued to their television screens and others were gathered around their radios.

For the very first time in South Africa, Africans, Indians, coloureds

and whites would be allowed to vote alongside each other for the government of their choice.

Back then we were still a deeply divided nation. Tensions were high. But the dire predictions of a race war did not materialise.

Instead, millions of people around the country stood patiently and peacefully in long queues, waiting for their turn to cast their vote.

On the 27th of April 1994 the dignity of South Africa's people – both black and white – was restored.

For as our beloved Madiba reminded us, ***“in the system of***

***apartheid, both the oppressed and the oppressor are robbed of their humanity”.***

On this day we pay tribute to you, the noble citizens of this country, the resilient nation that understands the true meaning of reconciliation.

We showed the world that it was indeed possible to move beyond a bitter history. We showed that dialogue is more powerful than any weapon.

We chose reconciliation over revenge. Healing over hatred. Peace over conflict.

We did so to honour the sacrifices of those who came before us,

and to show the world that even the most bitter of enemies can reconcile and rebuild.

These choices made three decades ago define our national character and have elevated our moral standing in the world.

We have been sought out by countries embroiled in conflict, hoping to learn from our experience with national reconciliation, conflict resolution and dialogue.

We are committed to assisting where we can to contribute to peace.

This week we received a visit from President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine, where we discussed the role South Africa can play through the African Peace Initiative in contributing to the end of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

South Africa remains committed to a progressive foreign policy outlook, and to engaging with countries of the Global North and the Global South in pursuit of our national interest.

South Africa owes its liberation to the many countries of the world that stood by us and supported our struggle.

We continue to stand in solidarity with the victims of conflict and war.

We stand with the peoples of Palestine, of Western Sahara, of the eastern DRC, of Sudan, of Yemen, and with victims of gender oppression in Afghanistan and other parts of the world.

We are committed to playing our part in bringing about an end to conflict, war and suffering.



We are a diverse nation. We have diverse cultures and traditions. We speak many languages.

But we have in common a respect for human dignity, Ubuntu and love for our country.

On this Freedom Day, there is so much we still need to remember and celebrate. Even now, there are people who seek to drive a wedge between us, who seek to rekindle the embers of racial bitterness.

These efforts will fail, because even the inhumane system of apartheid failed to destroy what binds us together as human beings.

History records how people of all races fought against oppression and injustice.

On this day we honour those who sacrificed, dreamed and believed in the promise of a better South Africa free of racial division.

It took individuals from across our country, religious leaders, traditional leaders, political activ-

ists young and old, workers and ordinary citizens to guide our country to democracy.

In a few days from now, on the 10th of May, we will commemorate 110 years since the birth of one such person: Beyers Naude, fondly known as Oom Bey.

He was an Afrikaner clergyman whose father helped found the Broederbond, the secretive society that orchestrated and perpetuated apartheid.

As a person who occupied a prominent position in apartheid society, who counted HF Verwoerd as among his university lecturers, Oom Bey would go on to play a significant role in fighting the unjust system from which he was a beneficiary.

On this day we remember many of our heroes of Afrikaner heritage who took a stance in defence of the liberty and freedom of South Africans: Oom Bey, Bram Fischer, Breyten Breytenbach, Athol Fugard, Ingrid Jonker, and many others who turned their backs on the tyranny of apartheid.

This is the kind of courage and principle and largeness of spirit that lives inside the South African people. Our liberation was secured through the actions of many: black and white, rich and poor, men and women.

We must say these things here today because we see the seeds of division being sown in our country and being exploited for political gain.

We are seeing attempts being made to rewrite history.

We are seeing efforts to cast one race in the position of the oppressed and the black majority, who were oppressed for centuries, in the role of oppressor.

Our apartheid wounds are being exploited to serve the agendas of others.

We must be clear. We will not allow anyone else to define us, to tell us who and what we are, or to turn us against one another.

We must roundly reject any attempts to divide us along racial lines. Not again. Never again.

*Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu.* You are because I am. This is the bedrock upon which this nation was formed.

Our walk to freedom has been a long one and it is not yet complete. As much as we reflect on our history, we do not lose sight of the challenges of the present.

We have been on this road to the promised land for a very long time. Many are weary and many may be losing hope.

Poverty, unemployment and inequality are deep wounds that

prevent us from reaching our full potential as a country.

The legacy of our bitter past continues to manifest itself in nearly all facets of life.

We are one of the world's most unequal societies.

It is said that the richest 10 percent of South Africans own approximately 85 percent of the country's financial assets.

Millions of people are unemployed or earn wages that cannot sustain them or their families. Crime, gender-based violence and the stench of corruption permeates across our society.

It is true that we have made considerable progress over the past three decades in improving the material conditions of the South African people.

We have invested heavily in the provision of basic services, health care, education and housing.

We have an extensive social welfare net that continues to address the effects of poverty on society's most vulnerable.

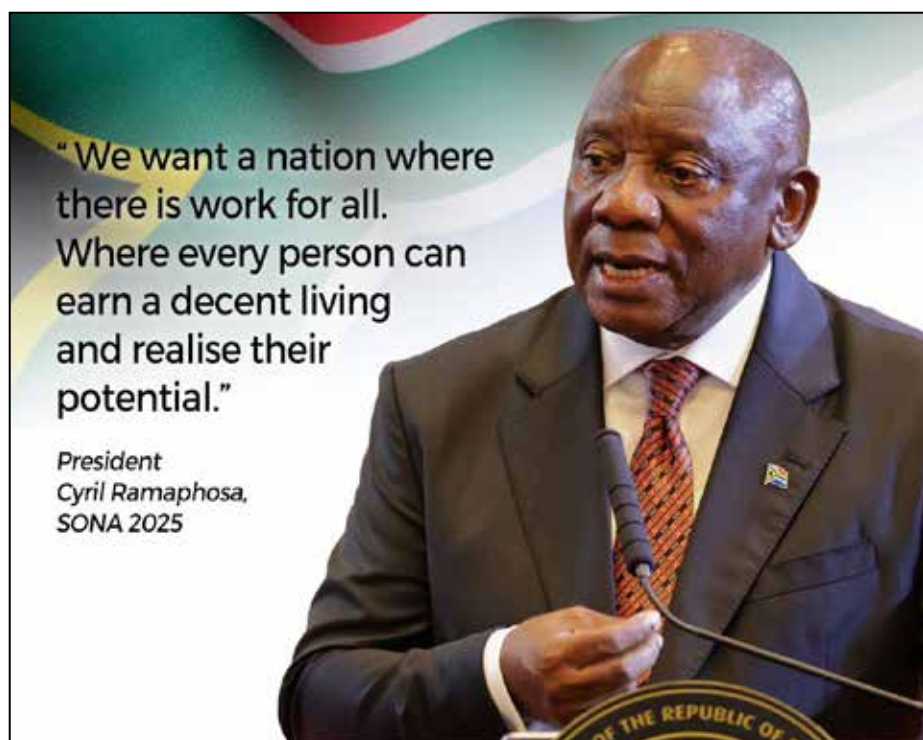
Yet we know that this is not enough. For our country to truly prosper and for inequality to be eliminated, we must build an economy that works for all, and not just for the few.

As the Government of National Unity, we have defined a set of key priorities.

These priorities are: driving inclusive growth and job creation, reducing poverty and the high cost of living, and building a capable, ethical and developmental state.

We have embarked on a programme of growth and reform to give effect to these priorities and we are making steady progress.

We owe it to our brave and noble forebears that every South African is given the chance and opportunity to improve their lives





## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT

and the prospects for their children.

As a government, we remain committed to advancing the principles of redress in our quest to realise a more equal society.

We will not relent in our pursuit of economic and social justice, whether it is with respect to affirmative action or land reform.

These are not acts of vengeance or punishment.

They are fundamental to the reconciliation we committed to as a people in 1994.

Over the past 30 years, we have made great strides as a nation, expanding freedom, deepening democracy and building a better life for millions.

Yet we also face these persistent challenges.

That is why we are convening an inclusive National Dialogue.

This is a people-led, society-wide process to reflect on the state of our country and reimagine its future.

The National Dialogue is a chance for all South Africans, from all walks of life, to come together and help shape the next chapter of our democracy.

The National Dialogue will bring together government, political parties, civil society, business, labour, traditional leaders, women, youth and community voices to find common ground and new solutions for our country.

It is an opportunity to forge a new social compact that drives progress towards Vision 2030 and lays the foundation for the next phase of South Africa's National Development Plan.

The National Dialogue cannot be an event. It must be a participatory process that will unfold in phases, from local consultations and sectoral engagements to national gatherings.

As we build a new society, let us be clear that this will forever remain a country that belongs to all who live in it, black and white.

We are determined to build a country where the white child and the black child has equal opportunity and an equal chance at a better life.

**So on this Freedom Day, I call on all South Africans to remember how far we have come on this, our shared journey.**

**Let us recommit ourselves to the ideals of our Constitution, to the pursuit of human dignity.**

**Let us stand firm against corruption, against criminality and against the war being perpetrated against this country's women and children.**

**No matter how difficult times may be, let us stand united.**

**Let us not turn away from the difficult task of building a more just, more equal South Africa.**

**Let us continue to nourish the flame of freedom and protect it, so it may be passed to future generations.**

**Let us move forward toward the South Africa of our dreams.**


May God bless South Africa and protect her people. ■



KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY **DEPUTY PRESIDENT SHIPOKOSA PAULUS MASHATILE** ON THE OCCASION OF THE

# T20 AFRICA HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE

AT CSIR INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE, PRETORIA

 On behalf of all participants and the Government of South Africa, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the organisers of this crucial and essential Think 20 (T20) Africa High-Level Dialogue, themed ***“Strengthening African Agency in the G20 Within the Global Order”***.

It is a privilege to have been invited to participate in this T20 under the G20 – an engagement that brings together research and policy institutions, academics and think tanks to provide policy recommendations and research-based insights to inform G20 decision-making.

As Government, we hold the T20 in high regard because it is a critical platform for the dissemination of intellectual and strategic inputs that ultimately facilitate the systematic articulation of African perspectives in global policy processes.

This gathering emphasises the need for Africa to address the persistent challenges of economic development, political instability, and governance weaknesses.

It calls for a critical evaluation of current interventions aimed at strengthening Africa’s priorities, including economic growth, sustainable development and global governance reforms.



Africa is ours, and we must create the Africa we want.

We must build on the ideas of our visionary leaders who committed themselves to the advancement of their African nations. I am reminded and grateful to intellectuals among other such as Ntsikana, Tiyo Soga, John Tengo Jabavu, Mpilo Walter Benson Rubusana, Samuel Edward Krune Mqhayi, Cheikh Anta Diop, Ali Mazrui, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, and Nelson Mandela.

These individuals have contributed significantly to literature, politics, religion, journalism, and the fight for liberation and reconciliation. They have established a trajectory

for Africa’s growth, resulting in over a dozen African nations attaining their independence. They are largely responsible for Africa’s current status as the world’s fastest-growing continent.

To make Africa great and attain complete political and economic independence, we must pick up where they left off. In collaboration with each of you present here today, we possess the collective ability to honour their legacy and positively transform Africa’s existing and future prospects for us all who call this continent home.

While Africa is one of the most fascinating continents, it currently stands at a crucial juncture in



## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT

its development journey, with a growing population, and vast natural resources, yet it remains underdeveloped.

We also need to recognise that Africa has the youngest population globally, with a significant proportion of its citizens under 30 years of age. The presence of a youthful population offers a range of possibilities for the development of the continent.

Regrettably, a significant proportion of Africa's youth are unemployed or underemployed, and many face limited access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Africa's demographic dividend remains underutilised with women and youth disproportionately excluded from formal economies.

Nonetheless, with targeted strategies and interventions, this segment of our population has the capacity to substantially enhance economic growth, stimulate innovation, and promote social development.

South Africa is committed to placing employment generation, advancing gender-responsive policies, and equitable access to opportunity at the centre of the G20 dialogue.

Africa can accelerate development through digitalisation, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and emerging technologies. The Fourth Industrial Revolution must be inclusive, bridging gaps in education, healthcare, financial services, and governance. Investment in digital skills, data infrastructure, cybersecurity, and innovation ecosystems is crucial to ensure that no one is left behind.

The South African G20 Presidency provides us with an opportunity to take meaningful steps towards addressing economic and developmental issues in Africa.

Since 1999, South Africa has been a member of the G20, which accounts for 85% of global GDP and 75% of international trade. This group is crucial for global economic cooperation, bringing

together leaders and policymakers from major economies to discuss and coordinate policies on various issues.

South Africa's G20 Presidency, being the first ever on African soil, marks a significant moment for the continent. Regardless of it being in South Africa, *"the G20 Presidency is for Africa."*

Through our Presidency, we intended to define the economic destiny of Africa, one marked by sustained growth, high employment, increased living standards, and sustainable development and innovation.

The inclusion of the African Union as a permanent member of the G20 also marks a transformational moment in global governance.

The move is the culmination of persistent advocacy to ensure Africa's rightful place in shaping global economic, political and social constructs.

South Africa's G20 Presidency is centred on the theme of **"solidarity, equality, and sustainability,"** which is not just a catchphrase but the reflection and commitment of the African order. The theme further reflects a commitment to re-imagine multilateralism in the face of fragmentation and rising unilateralism.

Our Presidency is grounded in the philosophy of **Ubuntu**, which reminds us that our fates are intertwined and that collective progress must underpin global governance.

This principle shapes our agenda and informs our deep engagement with the AU, African institutions, and fellow G20 member states.



## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT

Moreover, the Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability theme highlights the South African Government's commitment to tackling global concerns through collaborative action while also prioritising the needs and challenges of the Global South, particularly the Africa continent.

Currently, the world is facing relentless challenges that are testing our global humanity and solidarity among nations. Major megatrends such as globalisation, geopolitical instability, climate change, rising nationalism, demographic changes, technological convergence, conflict, trade wars, and financial crises are causing further hardship and have the potential to threaten our collective future.

Global economic growth is subdued, with many economies, particularly in Africa, burdened by unsustainable debt levels, while billions are affected by underdevelopment, inequality, poverty, and unemployment.

Similarly, our G20 Presidency has encountered significant changes in the landscape of global affairs. The challenges facing multilateralism, which have been apparent for an extended period, have now emerged as a significant factor that is fundamentally reshaping global dynamics and relationships.

Therefore, we should take a dim view and strongly discourage the erosion of multilateralism, as it poses a potential threat to global growth and stability. A fair, transparent, equitable, and inclusive international order is essential for economic stability and sustained growth.

The ongoing trade tensions may



**Through South Africa's G20 Presidency  
we will work to build a better Africa  
and a better world, and to ensure that  
no one is left behind.**

*– President Cyril Ramaphosa*

result in rising cost of living, due to increased prices, particularly for manufactured goods, potentially exacerbating the sluggish economic growth across our continent. It is necessary that we respond collectively and decisively as Africans while increasing capacity and capability to reduce dependency.

South Africa is acutely aware that war and conflict are innately detrimental to a nation's economy and its people, as evidenced by our experience during apartheid era. Devastation of infrastructure, loss of life and labour, and disruption of trade networks significantly impact economic stability.

Hence during our G20 Presidency, South Africa will persist in promoting constructive and peaceful resolutions. Engaging in inclusive dialogue, which stands as the primary assurance for achieving sustainable and enduring peace.

We call for deeper G20-AU collaboration in peace-building on the continent, including sustain-

able funding for AU peace operations and mechanisms aligned to the Silencing the Guns initiative. Strong institutions, regional integration and democratic accountability must guide our response to instability across the Sahel, DRC, and Horn of Africa.

South Africa has demonstrated a strong commitment in its foreign policy by advocating for principles such as justice, solidarity, equality, peace, and respect, all grounded in its dedication to human dignity.

The G20 Presidency of South Africa is poised to advocate for reforms within the global financial framework, emphasising the need for equitable credit rating systems, accessible climate financing, and substantial debt relief for nations with lower income levels. In this regard, it resonates with the agreement that achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 necessitates comprehensive transformation rather than mere policy adjustments.



South Africa has worked closely with the AU to ensure its six G20 priorities – ranging from inclusive development and fair finance to climate action and global governance reform – are integrated into our Presidency's workstreams. This includes our three G20 high-level Task Forces on:

- **Inclusive Economic Growth, Industrialisation, Employment and Inequality,**
- **Artificial Intelligence and Innovation for Sustainable Development, and**
- **Food Security.**

Africa has the potential to not only achieve food security but also to become a leading agricultural exporter globally. By investing in agricultural innovation, supply chains and rural industrialisation, we can ensure food sovereignty and economic empowerment.

Additionally, our Presidency will be the leading force behind a review of the Cost of Capital; an Africa-focused Compact with Africa meeting in Addis Ababa; a Critical Minerals Initiative to promote value addition and beneficiation; and a 20-year retrospective review of the G20 to assess impact and identify reforms.

In a nutshell, our ultimate goal for the duration of this Presidency is to prioritise the advancement of Africa. As we have indicated on a number of different occasions, we have identified four priorities for the term of this G20 Presidency which are:

1. Firstly, to strengthen disaster resilience and responses. This is due to the widespread damage that natural disasters cause to infrastructure, the interruption of economic activity, the destruction of livelihoods, and the unfortunate loss of lives.

“The G20 needs to renew its efforts to advance debt sustainability, with a particular emphasis on African countries.”

Johannesburg, South Africa | 20 February 2025

South Africa's G20 Presidency, 1 Dec 2024 - 30 Nov 2025

2. Secondly, to ensure debt sustainability for developing economies. The G20 will prioritise debt sustainability for developing economies; address rising sovereign debt levels and servicing costs; demonstrate leadership in addressing global economic imbalances; and fill the funding gaps necessary to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
3. Thirdly, to mobilise finance for a just energy transition. South Africa's G20 Presidency aims to mobilise financing for a just energy transition by focusing on limiting global temperature increases in an equitable and just manner. South Africa has pioneered the use of country platforms to coordinate funding through the Just Energy Transition Partnership.
4. Lastly, to harness critical minerals for inclusive growth and sustainable development. We seek to promote South Africa and Africa as a business and investment destination and for the country to lead in solving global economic challenges.

The geopolitical contest for critical minerals must not replicate extractive models of the past. South Africa's Critical Minerals Initiative seeks to establish sustainable, inclusive and diversified supply chains that prioritise local

beneficiation and value adding.

This aligns well with the African Green Minerals Strategy and builds on the 2024 UN Panel on Energy Transition Minerals. Africa must leverage its mineral wealth for industrialisation, energy transitions, and digital transformations.

During this Presidency, we are also amplifying Africa's strategic voice in a fragmented world. Africa's economic and geopolitical profile is rising. Driven by the African Continental Free Trade Area and domestic economic resilience, forecasts indicate that Africa will be the second-fastest growing region globally, and it is expected to increase intra-African trade by over 50 percent by 2035, significantly boosting economic activity.

However, structural inequality, the cost of capital, climate shocks, and persistent marginalisation in decision-making forums jeopardise this growth. The T20 Dialogue is therefore a key platform to consolidate Africa's intellectual leadership and develop strategic responses to these systemic challenges, ensuring Africa's agency is proactive, not reactive.

We must take advantage of the



## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT

African Continental Free Trade Area, Africa's most ambitious economic integration project, bringing together 55 AU Member States into a single market. The Free Trade Agreement in Africa promotes industrialisation by reducing reliance on raw material exports and promoting value-addition. It increases Africa's bargaining power in global trade negotiations, allowing it to attract more direct foreign investment, negotiate better trade deals with other continents, and develop diverse industries.

Nonetheless, there is still more work to be done to overcome inefficient logistics and inadequate infrastructure. Modern transport networks must be developed, for example, while energy and digital infrastructure must be built, trade restrictions must be lifted, and smooth cross-border trade must be encouraged.

In our pursuit of strengthening African agency within the G20 framework, we must re-emphasise the importance of collaboration, open dialogue, and collective action. As African nations, we have to come together and speak with one voice. We have to combine our strengths to guide policies and decisions that align with our interests and aspirations.

Furthermore, we must engage constructively with our global partners within the G20, cultivating partnerships founded on mutual respect, understanding, and reciprocity. We can construct a more equal and inclusive global order that benefits all countries by bridging gaps and forging partnerships.

I truly believe that a fair, inclusive global order is possible, but it requires leadership grounded

in equity, responsibility, and co-operation. The G20 should form part of this as we seek to unite as country states and develop policies that are progressive for the interest of all. Our intention is to work with like-minded countries and progressive institutions to establish a more equitable, representative, and just international order.

The G20 is not a substitute for existing international institutions but must complement and accelerate progress on already agreed global commitments. As we reflect on *"The G20 After 20 Years"*, South Africa is initiating a review to ensure the forum remains responsive, representative and reform-orientated.

In conclusion, let us remember that the strength of the G20 lies in its diversity and inclusivity.

Strengthening African agency within this framework not only empowers African states but also increases the credibility and efficacy of global governance.

South Africa's G20 Presidency

will remain accountable to the continent and to its people.

We are not just observers of history; we are co-authors of a new global order. The T20 Africa High-Level Policy Dialogue is not simply a meeting of minds; it is an affirmation of Africa's leadership in reshaping the global agenda.

I am therefore confident that, over the coming days, you will be spending time dealing with epistemology, both tacit and explicit application. I hope you will have meaningful contributions to advancing African Agency in the G20 and on the global stage.

At the end, we must conclude this dialogue with a clear grasp of what must be done to reposition Africa as a hub of knowledge and growth while finding solutions to its challenges.

Africa is at a turning point, armed with ambition, vision, and growing global influence.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to participate in this dialogue. ■



# ANC STATEMENT ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE VAT INCREASE AND THE NEXT STEPS IN THE BUDGET PROCESS, WORKERS DAY AND REDUCTION OF ROAD FATALITIES

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

**T**HE African National Congress (ANC) welcomes the formal withdrawal of the proposed VAT increase by the Minister of Finance and the setting aside of the 2025 Fiscal Framework. This outcome is not a legal victory for any party, but a decisive political resolution rooted in consultation, maturity, and the guiding principles of the Freedom Charter: ***“The People Shall Govern.”***

The ANC remains steadfast in asserting that the work of government must be shaped not by courtrooms and media spectacle, but through democratic consultation, constructive consensus-building, and revolutionary responsibility to the people.

The political decision to reverse the VAT increase was reached after substantive engagement between the ANC and ten other parties in Parliament – all of whom demonstrated discipline, focus, and patriotic clarity. These include the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), ActionSA, Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), Rise Mzansi, Build One South Africa (BOSA), United Democratic Movement (UDM), Al Jama-ah, Patriotic Alliance (PA),



GOOD Party, and the National Coloured Congress (NCC).

We salute the collective maturity shown in reaching this outcome – a moment that affirmed that political differences need not paralyze governance, and that principled cooperation in the national interest is not only possible but necessary.

## **A PEOPLE'S BUDGET ROOTED IN GROWTH AND REDRESS**

We note that the Minister of Finance has communicated a new process to adopt the revised fiscal

framework that will now be tabled on 21 May 2025. We call on government to ensure that it reflects a conscious decision to protect the most vulnerable while ensuring the budget remains a tool for inclusive growth, job creation, and economic reconstruction.

It has to be a people's budget – a budget that does not retreat into austerity, nor sacrifice long-term transformation at the altar of technical compliance. Instead, it balances pro-growth policy with pro-poor spending, rooted in the developmental ethos of the Freedom Charter and the democratic

values of the Constitution.

The ANC will continue with its work to engage other political parties, within the GNU, and across the floor of Parliament around the revised Fiscal Framework. Our goal is to sustain the work that we started after the initial Fiscal Framework was tabled in Parliament and build consensus around a progressive medium-term fiscal strategy that takes us out of the austerity cycle into a comprehensive Growth Agenda.

#### AMONG THE KEY FEATURES THAT MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE REVISED FISCAL FRAMEWORK ARE:

- A sustained strategic shift in fiscal allocations to be biased more towards economic classifications, especially measures that will kick start growth that creates momentum for increased entrepreneurial activity and massive employment across the economy.
- Transport Infrastructure: Increased investment in road, rail, and commuter infrastructure to unlock regional trade, reduce the cost of movement for working people, improve freight logistics by lowering costs and improving the predictability of goods movement, and stimulate local economies through public investment initiatives.
- Zero-Rated Goods Expansion: Additional food items have been added to the VAT-free basket to reduce food insecurity and ensure direct relief for poor households.
- Water Infrastructure and Dam Projects: Strategic investment to boost long-term water security, particularly in drought-prone areas, ensuring both



household access and agricultural viability.

- Healthcare Funding: The employment of 9,300 health workers and 800 post-community service doctors across provinces, expanding front-line capacity and improving public health delivery.
- Public Service Efficiency: Thousands of public service posts must be filled to address vacancies and improve access to government services.
- Basic Education and Teacher Retention: Ensure that funding is ring-fenced to retain teachers in classrooms, especially in rural and township schools, ensuring continuity in learning and the safeguarding of education gains.
- Early Childhood Development: Expanded allocations for early learning infrastructure, nutrition, and educator support to strengthen the foundation phase.
- Post-School Education and Training: Additional funding to NSFAS to support students from poor and working-class backgrounds, ensuring no deserving student is excluded from university or college education due to financial constraints.
- Social Protection: Over

R30billion has been allocated to extend the Social Relief of Distress (SRD) Grant, currently reaching more than 8.5 million people. This is a strategic step toward the long-term vision of implementing a Basic Income Grant.

#### CLARITY ON LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS

The VAT reversal and the setting aside of the 2025 Fiscal Framework were formalised through an out-of-court settlement, endorsed as a court order by the Cape High Court on 27 April 2025. This gave legal effect to a political consensus and ensured that the VAT increase would not automatically come into force on 1 May 2025.

We welcome that Parliament did not concede to any procedural defects and further note that its processes were in full compliance with the Constitution and the Money Bills and Related Matters Act. However, in light of the Finance Minister's withdrawal of the Division of Revenue and Appropriation Bills, and the submission of new revenue proposals, it has become necessary to legally clear the path for tabling a new budget.

The Minister will now table the



revised budget on 21 May 2025, and Parliament will adjust its programme to ensure full compliance with legislative timelines, finalising the budget before the end of July 2025.

### THE ANC: CENTRE OF STABILITY, ANCHOR OF TRANSFORMATION

Once again, the ANC has led society through a difficult moment with discipline, political clarity, and maturity. We did not yield to populist noise. We did not collapse under pressure. We listened to the people, engaged the opposition, and acted in unity with others to ensure that this budget remains transformative, redistributive, and growth-focused.

We will not allow the National Democratic Revolution to be undermined through backdoor austerity, nor will we allow the legacy of the liberation movement to be diluted through short-term compromises. The Freedom Charter remains our lodestar – and this budget reflects that.

Let the message be clear: **The ANC governs for the people, with the people, and in service of the people.** The revised fiscal framework should be a progressive tool that will deliver jobs, strengthen public services, and uplift the poor.

### DEFENDING WORKERS' RIGHTS AGAINST DA'S ATTACK ON EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

As the nation prepares to celebrate Workers' Day tomorrow, the ANC will continue to defend the hard-won labour rights that generations of workers have fought for. We call on our people to join the Workers' Day rallies organ-

ised by COSATU throughout the country and to recommit to the principles of dignity, equity, and justice in the workplace.

Our steadfast rejection of the DA's attempt to use the VAT increase as political extortion underscores this commitment. Behind the scenes, the DA was not only bargaining for budget concessions – they were pushing for a new labour regime that would allow employers to dismiss workers without due process, dismantle affirmative action, and roll back transformation. We will not relent in defending the progressive legal and constitutional framework that protects workers today.

We will never allow the working class to become collateral damage in budget negotiations. Instead, the ANC will continue to champion a growing, inclusive economy that brings more South Africans – especially young people, women, and rural communities – into the labour force, with dignity and security.

It is in this spirit that we denounce the DA's court challenge against the Employment Equity Act. It is not only a legal manoeuvre – it is a calculated political stunt, launched on the eve of Workers' Day, aimed at reversing three decades of democratic gains. It is an affront to workers, to the poor, and to our national Constitution.

This is part of a broader pattern.

As we warned ahead of the 2024 elections, the DA has consistently opposed transformative legislation: the BELA Act, the NHI Act, the Expropriation Bill, and now the Employment Equity Amendment Act – all of which seek to restructure power, ownership, and access in our society.

The DA's hatred for transformation has become shameless. In the Western Cape, under DA leadership, employers are advised not to comply with equity legislation, and South Africans are told not to expect preference in employment – an illegal and immoral policy that betrays the principles of common citizenship and constitutional redress.

This is made worse by the DA-aligned campaigns of Solidariteit and AfriForum, who tour foreign capitals like the United States to spread lies about the ANC "lynching" minorities – treasonous distortions that insult the spirit of unity and undermine our democratic sovereignty.

Let us be clear: the **Employment Equity Act is not an attack on anyone – it is a constitutional imperative.** Its recent amendments, achieved through Ned-lac consensus, ensure sectoral targets that reflect regional realities, support SMMEs, and hold employers accountable in state contracts. These reforms are modest, rational, and necessary.

The Freedom Charter foresaw this moment. In Clause 7 it proclaimed: **"There Shall be Work and Security!"** That clause called for equal pay, the right to organise, maternity leave, a national minimum wage, and protection against exploitation. It demanded the abolition of child labour, compound labour, and the ToT system. The ANC's revolutionary duty is to implement that vision – not to debate it with reactionaries.

We will stand with COSATU, the South African Communist Party, and all progressive formations in resisting this desperate assault by the DA. Through this act, they

are drifting from the spirit of the Government of National Unity and positioning themselves outside the project of nation-building and shared prosperity.

Transformation, equity, and diversity are not up for negotiation. We will not surrender to elitist Apartheid nostalgia or legal posturing. As an organisation rooted in the struggle of mineworkers, farmworkers, domestic workers, teachers, and nurses, the ANC reaffirms: All Shall Share in the Country's Wealth.

#### ROAD SAFETY: A MOMENT OF NATIONAL PRIDE AND PAUSE

The ANC congratulates the ANC-led government and the Department of Transport for a successful Easter Road Safety Campaign, which saw a significant clampdown on road fatalities and lawlessness. We also thank South Africans for heeding calls to travel responsibly and obey road laws.

This is a moment of both celebration and reflection – a recognition that effective government action, combined with public cooperation, can save lives and promote a culture of responsibility.

At the same time, we extend our heartfelt condolences to the families who lost loved ones during this period. Your loss is our collective pain. We remain committed to strengthening road safety campaigns throughout the year to ensure fewer families face this sorrow.

The struggle continues – and through this people's budget, we deepen the path to a more just, united, and prosperous South Africa. ■



## UNITY OF ACTION AND UNITY OF PURPOSE:

### Lessons from the 10<sup>th</sup> ANC Provincial Conference in the Northern Cape

■ By **ANC TREASURER GENERAL DR GWEN RAMOKGOPA**

**T**HE political algorithm that has been haunting us in this passing political era has been the difficult term: *“the existential crisis facing the ANC”*. It seems as if the ANC 10th Provincial Conference in the Northern Cape responded to this political algorithm.

The cornerstone of life and democracy is to differ in opinion and in differing in opinion seek to respect such differences and protect each other as living organisms from such difference of

opinions. These differences of opinions manifest themselves into opinions of thought, science, leadership, politics and general perspectives of life etc. The French philosopher: Voltaire (1864-1778), born Francois-Marie Arouet wisely writes: *“I may differ with you, but, I will fight unto death your right to say it”*. This is the foundation of tolerance of diversity and opinions – a freedom and democracy that that we need as the ANC and the embryonic national democratic society that we seek to cultivate. The ANC 10th

Provincial Conference sought to rise above this 'difference' as described by Voltaire and established an inner truce for the sake of unity of action and unity of purpose of our organisation and our infant democratic society.

The Northern Cape learnt through pain that a house divided amongst itself cannot stand. The loss of support of the ANC within the miscellaneous classes of our society, more gregariously, the African proletariat class, an important motive force of our national democratic revolution. A significant class, who abdicated in protest from voting the ANC. This observation alone is like a fresh wound on the body of the ANC. The reelection of the top five (5) of the ANC in the Northern Cape by the 10th Provincial Conference, through consensus, is like a medical attention of this fresh wound by an equipped team of experts.

A conference of the ANC is a conference of the branches of the ANC. These branches of the ANC took a resolve as averred by Pixley ka Isaka Seme in 1911, in whose name one of the six (5) Regions of the Northern Cape has been named after: *"we are one people. These divisions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our woes today"*.

Our people are sick and tired of seeing divisions, squabbles, picayune fights and all the noxious and obnoxious vices parading themselves freely within the ANC. Our people want the ANC that they know as an oldest liberation movement in the Continent and the world. An ANC that is a caring organisation. An ANC which is a cradle of the wishes and aspirations of the people. We have received an honest report



which is an open secret; that in the past four (4) years there were sixteen (16) byelections in the Northern Cape and the ANC lost only three (3). To us, as the ANC, this sounds like a rhapsody, more like, an ancient Greek mythology, the phoenix - a mythical bird that rises from its own ashes. The ANC has endured a period of pain, loss, destruction, division and adversity and this 10th Provincial Conference transforms the ANC into an allegory for renewal, unity, transformation and internal renaissance. What the ANC is doing in the Northern Cape is not enough; more still needs to be done.

In my keynote address, I intimated that the Northern Cape is also a hamlet of the brave and a homestead of the gallant revolutionaries who contributed to our glorious struggle for freedom and democracy. Solomon Tshekisho Plaatjie; one of the founding fathers of the ANC and the first Secretary General of the ANC in 1912; then called South African Native National Congress (SANNC) also lived and attended school in Kimberley. He whose mortal remains are interred in the Northern Cape. An organic intellectual who authored books such as *"The Native Life In South Africa"* which was published in 1916 to demonstrate the opposi-

tion of the ANC to the Land Act of 1913 which was taking 87% of the land and giving it to the white minority who only formed 13% of the population density of South Africa. More than 100 years later we are still grappling with the problem of land-hunger, and we drink from the well of wisdom of Tshekisho Plaatjie in an attempt to solve the national question of land hunger amongst the Black majority.

As the ANC led government, we have passed a legislation titled: Expropriation Act No. 13 of 2024. The Act addresses the age-old national grievance of land hunger as decried by Plaatjie. The Act regulates the procedure for expropriation of land for public purpose or public interest. This Act regulates payment of compensation. Far more importantly, this Act regulates and identifies certain instances where the provision of nil compensation may be just and equitable for expropriation in the public interest. It is vitally imperative that we should use this 10th ANC Provincial Conference in the Northern Cape to erudite, especially, the Afri-Forum & DA, that this Act should not be referenced with pseudo epithets such as *"Expropriation without compensation Act"* because such labelling is tantamount to disinformation and propaganda



of fake news. The genuine and true name of this Act is: The Expropriation Act No. 13 of 2024.

Mme Francis Baardt was born in 1909 in Kimberly of the Northern Cape and she dedicated her life to organizing workers and women against apartheid. She played key roles in the African Food and Canning Worker's Union, the ANC Women's League, and the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) and was a member of the National Executive of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). Notate John Taolo Gaetsewe comes from this mighty province of the Northern Cape.

The mandate that has been given to the ANC in the May 2024 National and Provincial General Elections by the electorates is extremely significant. This includes those who abdicated to vote. As the ANC, this abdication to vote represents a vote; but, a protest vote, because it says: *"wake up ANC and make reflections"*. The six priorities in our election manifesto remain our revolutionary catechism: decisive and visible action to renew the ANC; fixing

local government and ensuring water and energy security; making municipalities responsive, strengthening ANC Caucuses; Speeding up inclusive economic growth to create jobs, implementing our national jobs plan, prioritizing industrialization, supporting small businesses and township economies, investing in infrastructure, and advancing land reform; strengthening the fight against crime and corruption, GBV, and building safe communities; building a South Africa that belongs to all through National Dialogue: Continuing the preparations and engagement for this vital dialogue, in the context of the Freedom Charter's 70th anniversary this year and building a better Africa and a better World as well as navigating a complex global landscape and advocating for a just world order.

The content of my keynote address also covered the importance of the wealth of the Northern Cape as one of the richest provinces in the world. The discovery of diamonds in 1867 in Kimberley and the concomitant Kimberley diamond rush. These endowments, include the mining

of iron ore in Kumba, Sedibeng and the extraction of manganese in Kgalagadi in the John Taolo Gaetsewe Region. There are several energy renewable projects in the Northern Cape such as solar power, wind and green hydrogen production and storage.

In article by Marleny Arnoldi, the deputy editor of Creamer Media's Engineering News & Mining Weekly, an online publication, dated 18th April 2024; a Norway based Company has developed interest in hybrid of both solar and battery in the Northern Cape and has engineered one of the *"one of the largest hybrid power projects globally"*.

Political stability gives way to economic prosperity and the 10th ANC Provincial Conference in the Northern Cape was an indication that unity of purpose and unity of action can be achieved and it can be achieved in our life time. ■

*(Dr. Gwen Ramokgopa was mandated by the ANC to deliver a keynote address to the 10th ANC Provincial Conference in the Northern Cape).*



ANC Northern Cape newly elected Top Five Officials

# COSATU is dismayed by the DA's spurious attack on Employment Equity

■ Statement issued by **COSATU**

**T**HE Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) is dismayed by the Democratic Alliance (DA)'s spurious attack on Employment Equity with their declared intention to have the Act declared unconstitutional in the North Gauteng High Court on 6 May.

Whilst the DA is free to take any law to court for constitutional verification, we are confident their court challenge will be dismissed as legal adventurism. It is extremely disappointing that in this year when dog whistling has been taken to extraordinarily dangerous levels, the DA has in a moment of ill-considered rashness failed to resist the temptation to jump on this toxic bandwagon.

The Constitution is eloquently clear in its requirements for the state to seek measures to address the discriminatory legacies of the past and the inequalities of today, including through employment equity and fair discrimination. Any government which fails to live up to these fundamental constitutional prescriptions can and has been taken to court previously.

The Employment Equity Act is nearly as old as our hard-won

democracy and stood the test of time, including previous court reviews. It is peculiar that the DA's court challenge omits to acknowledge the well considered 2023 amendments to the Employment Equity Act.

These amendments sought, after extensive engagements between labour and business at Nedlac and similar public hearings at Parliament, to strike a fair balance between easing administrative burdens on SMMEs, reflecting South Africa's demographic diversity (including regional), and equally to nudge employers to do better to ensure all employees have a fair chance to fulfil their full potential, in particular those historically denied equal opportunity.

These changes include easing reporting requirements on SMMEs, adapting employment equity targets to take into account our regional demographic diversity and to adopt more focused targets for sectors falling painfully behind employment equity progress. The Regulations provide ample time, e.g. five years and modest targets, well below population demographics, for employers to work towards. As with all laws, exemptions are provided for employers who have tried but

for a variety of reasons cannot achieve their targets.

It is alarming that the DA court papers are premised upon fake news about the Act and its Regulations. No where in either does it provide for any worker, of any colour or gender, to lose their job. None. Any statement claiming they do should be taken as seriously as the flat earth hysteria on social media. Employment Equity and transformation remains an extremely emotive matter for all workers and should be handled with the necessary care and sensitivity and not used to score likes on social media.

The Constitution, guided by the call of the Freedom Charter, declares that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Black and White. The Employment Equity Act and its Regulations speak to that, as do they the realities of the lack of tangible transformation in the private sector where 31 years into democracy, 60% of managerial posts are held by White South Africans, and nearly all low income posts by African and Coloured compatriots. Unemployment too is inevitably guided by the colour of one's skin. These are the painful realities politicians must appreciate. ■



# Public-Private Partnerships Are Key to Unlocking Youth Potential and Rebuilding Trust

■ By **NONCEBA MHLAULI**

**T**HIS past week we joined West Coast College and Transnet in Vredenburg to mark an inspiring milestone: the launch of a Corporate Social Investment (CSI) initiative designed to tackle youth unemployment through targeted skills development and opportunity creation.

This programme is far more than symbolic. It is a **strategic intervention** in one of the most urgent socio-economic crises facing South Africa – youth unemploy-

ment, which currently sits at over 60%. At its core, this initiative recognises that **economic inclusion begins with skills, and hope begins with opportunity.**

The programme, implemented in partnership with West Coast College and funded by Transnet, delivers practical training, mentorship, and entrepreneurial exposure to young people in the West Coast region. It is deeply aligned with the government's **Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP)** and re-

inforces the priorities of the **Presidential Youth Employment Intervention**, which calls for stronger collaboration between the state and private sector to expand access to meaningful work.

Transnet's role as sponsor goes beyond financial support. Its contribution includes infrastructure, training materials, and pathways for real-world exposure – giving participants the tools and networks needed to bridge the gap between learning and earning. This is a **living example of how**



state-owned enterprises can be leveraged as instruments of nation-building and inclusive growth.

Our participation was not only a show of support, but a public signal that **government is prepared to walk alongside its people**. But it must go further. If the ruling party is serious about building trust and reconnecting with communities – especially the youth who feel increasingly alienated from politics – **it must multiply and mainstream initiatives like this across the country**.

In too many regions, the state feels distant, policy feels abstract, and change feels slow. CSI programmes like this are a bridge – not just to economic opportunity, but to renewed political legitimacy. When government shows up in people's lives in ways that are



practical, empowering, and responsive, **it rebuilds a vital relationship between citizens and**

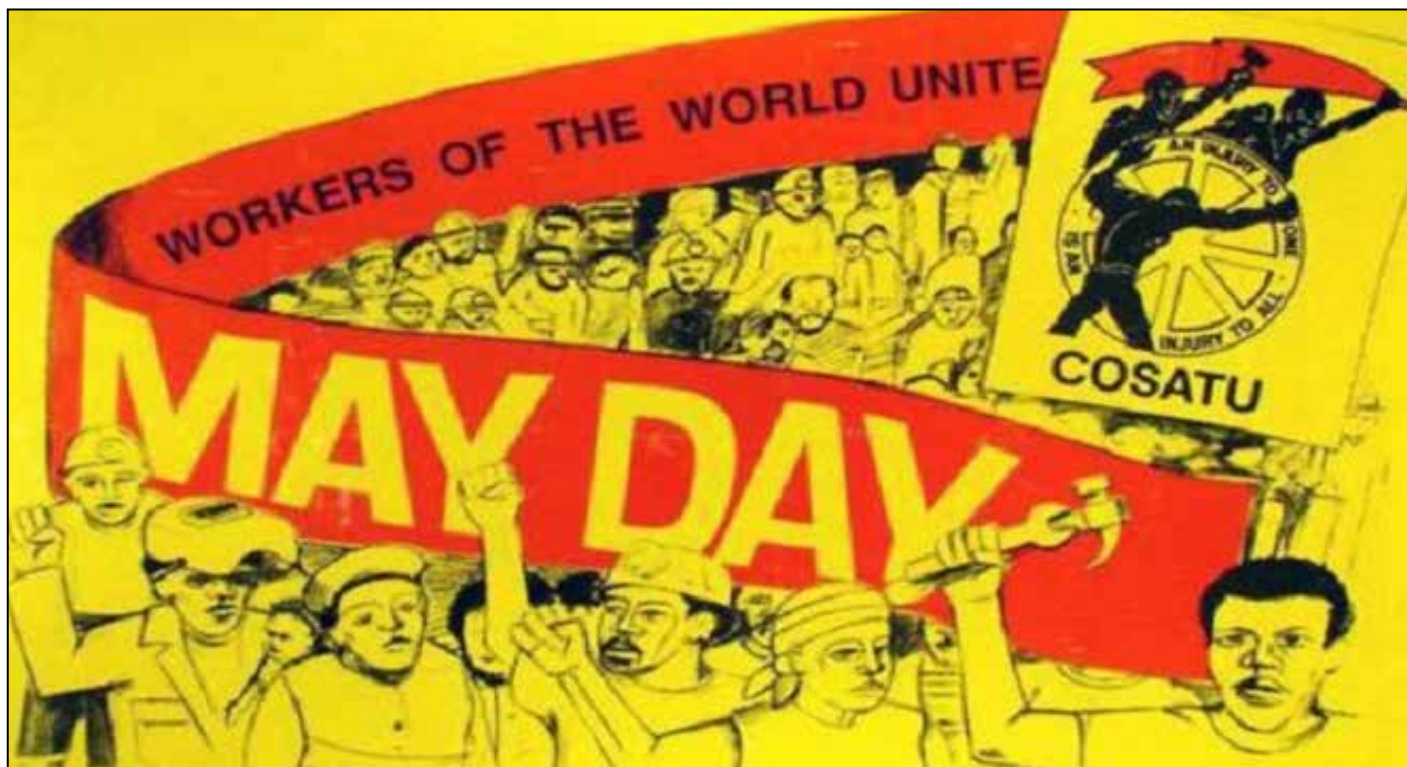
**state.**

The time for one-off interventions is over. What is needed now is **scale, visibility, and replication**. Every province should be home to initiatives like this – programmes that equip young people with skills, link them to opportunities, and demonstrate that both the public and private sectors are invested in their future.

For the ruling party, this is not just policy – it is politics in its most constructive form. It is how you **get closer to your constituents, rebuild credibility, and turn promises into lived realities**. By showing that it can deliver not just at the podium but on the ground, the party has an opportunity to lead with both purpose and impact.

With more partnerships like this, we can not only reduce youth unemployment – we can restore faith in the power of collaboration, and in a future where no young South African is left behind. ■





# INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY – WORKING CLASS SOLIDARITY

■ By **GEORGE MAGOMA**

**I**N unison, side by side, workers across the world walk hand in hand singing “The Internationale”. This a rallying chant that unites the human race in solidarity to change the face of the world by building a new front to confront the monstrosity of capitalism, its dominance and its persist thrive on parasitic extraction. This important day is a platform to commemorate historic workers struggles and the achievements amassed since the formation of the labour movements across the world.

May Day presents an opportunity

for an analysis of the landscape, the assessment of the strengths and challenges facing the labour movement, identification and dealing with impediments stifling progress in the course of its evolution and programmes to change the labour environment in favour of the working class. We must admit, workers across the world are under attack.

The world had undergone massive metamorphosis, morphing into a new paradigm that must be harnessed for more inclusivity and equity as opposed to a stubborn system that voracious-

ly benefits the bourgeoisie whilst workers feed on the remnants of their toil. These changes are coordinated on the basis of working class consciousness as a deliberate agenda to introduce a system that benefits workers, cushioning them against exploitation. In the South African milieu the umbilical cord that unites society, the poor and the working class, and the struggles embedded in solidarity had proven more potent as it had delivered a fatal blow to the apartheid regime. This was unity in purpose founded on the mantra that “*An Injury to One is an Injury to All*” as championed



by the Congress of the South Africa Trade Unions (COSATU).

These struggles were manifold, employing different strategies and tactics in very hostile conditions. To sustain its existence for the benefit of the minority the apartheid regime introduced repressive measures, suppressing working class struggles and support for the liberation struggle. This culminated in the banning of the South African Communist Party by introducing the Suppression of Communism Act which was enacted in 1950.

Other draconian legislation was introduced to emasculate workers struggles against labour exploitation and capitalism whilst pursuing the liberation struggle for a free, just South Africa devoid of the mortifications of poverty and capitalist greed. It is these struggles, led by the workers which delivered a final blow to the apartheid regime, ending white minority rule on the 27 April 1994. These epic struggles of working class unity and solidarity ushered the 1994 watershed. As a country, we owe these freedoms to the workers and the international community unity under solidarity and working class internationalism.

The struggle against apartheid, especially the banning of the liberation movement in 1960 elevated the South African cause internationally, interweaving the liberation struggle with the working class struggles.

An analysis of the path traversed exposes deep fissures of inequality, vestiges of a stubborn system of cupidity that thrives on labour exploitation, paltry wages and suppression of trade unionism. To give impetus to transformation



as a way of wealth distribution, diversification of the shop floor, equity within the job place, and a decent living wage, workers safety and health the Employment Equity Amendment Act was passed. Consistent with its neo-liberal and anti-transformation agenda, its nostalgic past, the Employment Equity Amendment Act was challenged. This as an attack on workers and an unbridled system that perpetuates the status quo, labour exploitation and the relegation workers to the margins of the economy.

The Employment Equity Amendment Act is not just law but a potent and effective weapon of insulating workers against arbitrary dismissal. At the same time, it creates conducive conditions for workers to benefit in the impenetrable system that has for many years a citadel of exploitation, accelerating the transformation of the workplace. Through this intervention, the fortress of capitalist exploitation will collapse, leading to the introduction of new measures that ensure equitable access and diversity.

There is a fightback against transformation. The liberal and right-wing forces are launching systematic attacks on any attempts and

efforts to change the face of the labour market in favour of an inclusive society that benefits on its toil, its vision for a prosperous South Africa, deepening democracy.

In addition to this ground-breaking legislation the county passed the Labour Relations Act, acts that ban servitude, forced, child labour and those that promote trade unionism, the right to strike, sectoral determination, protection of farmworkers and domestic workers, equality, access and other rights. This is progressiveness.

Labour strikes in South Africa are a significant feature of the country's industrial relations landscape, often driven by disputes over wages, working conditions, and union recognition. While strikes have decreased in frequency compared to earlier decades, they remain a tool for workers to assert their rights and demands.

To strengthen and support working class struggles where each person shall share in the country's wealth, common citizenship and decency, the ANC declared 2025 at *"The year of renewal to make the ANC a more effective instrument of the people to achieve the vision of the free-*



*dom charter: The people shall govern! The people shall share in the country's wealth!"* We call upon workers to contribute to the life and, strength and growth of the ANC, to build it into a more effective organisation capable of advancing the National Democratic Revolution, and advancing workers' rights.

The International Workers Day aptly takes place on the 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter to share in the country's wealth. This is the struggle about the country's rich endowments for which the workers must benefit, the land from which workers shall reap the fruits their labour, subsistence farming, food security and land ownership.

The global theme of *"Social justice and decent work. Safety and health of workers."* buttresses the ANC's work of changing the workplace through diversification, safety standards and equality. We derive action from this theme to address the contemporary workplace challenges. In South Africa, the Mineral Safety Act was enacted to address worker fatalities and injuries. In addition to the Occupational Health and Safety Standards government passed a string of laws to promote workers' safety. These are workers victories led by the South African Communist Party which commemorates this momentous day under the theme *"Build Working Class For Economic Liberation Towards Socialism."* These themes underscore the power of unity, and the unity of the tripartite alliance.

***"Workers of the World Unite"*** is a rallying cry for better working conditions and a decent living wage driven by the working class. In our context as a country



at whose heart are the interests of the workers we pride ourselves with a string of progressive legislation ranging from the Labour Relations Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Mining Safety Act, Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act to the Unemployment Insurance Fund Act to address the plight of workers, to ensure equity within the workplace, to protect workers from discrimination and exploitation and to bridge the wage gap.

May Day is an important day in the life of liberation movement as these struggles are dialectically linked to the liberation struggle. Both are inseparable and non-negotiable. The ANC salutes workers united under COSATU in the complex path of the fiscal policy, especially the VAT increase which we together with the workers reversed to shield workers from the economic hardships, unaffordable food and oil prices. If implemented, it has the danger of reversing the workers gains, inflicting more harm on the poor and the working class.

In its wisdom, in line with the commitment the ANC made to reduce the high cost of living,

to accelerate socio-economic transformation, the ANC listened, engaged, consulted and stood with the workers in unison. In the paradox of plenty, high tariffs, a changing global order of inclusive multilateralism, partnerships and collaboration for mutual benefit and reciprocal growth the ANC will continue with its mission of changing the lives of the people for the better.

United under the Internationale', progressive internationalism, a free world devoid of protectionism, exploitation, imperialism and extractive capitalism, the ANC will mobilise and strive for the transformation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other global institutions.

The ANC calls upon workers to unite to change the face of our unequal and impassable economy, financial access and to intensify the struggle against a persistent racist agenda of anti-transformation, the speedy implementation of the National Health Insurance Act, the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act, the Expropriation Act and the Employment Equity Amendment Act to bridge the gap through diversity and inclusion.

In commemorating this day the ANC recognizes the sterling leadership JB Marks, Moses Mabhida, Violet Sebone, Moses Kotane, Johnny Makhathini, Dulcie September, Ruth First, Wilton Mkwayi, Elijah Barayi, Joe Slovo, Chris Hani and many others to whom we pay tribute and honour for their immense contribution to the liberation and workers struggles. Our liberation history is incomplete without mention of these martyrs as mainstays and pioneers of the workers struggles and our freedom. ■

# The Proposed Transformation Fund Aims to Work With and for Black Women

■ By **SARAH MOKWEBO**

**O**N 20 March the department of trade, industry and competition published the Transformation Fund draft policy for public comment. It is intended to aggregate enterprise and supplier development funds from business organisations and the Competition Commission's public interest participation investment commitments in support of transformation in the economy.

There has been resistance to the fund, with some calling it another avenue for corruption. Others dismiss it as an extra burden on businesses.

**It advocates for SMME's owned by women, addresses problems women have with financing and targets productive sectors such as agriculture, where women labourers are concentrated.**



The criticism is misplaced and also ignores the necessity of the fund in addressing the slow pace of transformation, racialised gender and class household disparities, racial hierarchies in labour markets and unequal wealth levels.

The proposed fund alleviates racialised gender inequalities by elevating three essential proposals.

First, it advocates for specifically supporting small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) owned by black women and other designated groups such as youth and people living with disabilities.

This broadens the conversation

around black women's economic empowerment beyond the confines of the labour market, which is often limited to the lowest-paying and non-senior roles. Entrepreneurship and other non-wage forms of livelihood practices should be essential parts of national economic strategies aimed at alleviating black women's socio-economic exclusion.

The Transformation Fund identifies black women owned SMMEs as key policy beneficiaries.

Second, the fund proposes several measures to address a long-standing problem for economic gender equality in South





Africa: access to finance. Conventional commercial and development finance policy instruments have made it difficult for black women to access capital. Risk measures and regulatory frameworks are gender blind and they often ignore structural realities facing black women. For example, the use of collateral assessments based on property and land overlooks the general gendered land access and asset ownership disparities in South Africa.

This also applies to stringent off-take requirements, which often assume that black women have adequate access to demand or procurement contracts in sectors still largely dominated by white and male-owned businesses. Various reports by the Competition Commission highlight South Africa's rigid and exclusionary market structures, which continue to impede black women's access to market share.

Third, the proposed fund identifies high-impact sectors that can drive economic transformation. Among these is agriculture, which holds significant potential for advancing black women's economic empowerment. Agriculture is already a sector with a high concentration of women labourers - many of whom remain confined to low-paying, informal

or seasonal roles, underscoring the need for targeted support that enables their upward mobility and ownership within the value chain.

A dedicated focus on diversifying agriculture and agro-processing is essential in a context of high food insecurity and gendered economic exclusion. This proposal shifts from a focus on mining, energy and finance that has dominated previous black economic empowerment transactions. It also creates an opportunity to link agricultural economic

transformation with social policy programmes such as the school nutrition and social transfer initiatives. Brazil's school nutrition programme under President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's administration followed a similar model and yielded notable socio-economic benefits.

The supply chains tied to these areas of government expenditure can be strategically restructured to enable greater integration of black women into agricultural value chains.

By empowering black women economically, we are not only fulfilling a moral and legal obligation but also unlocking a powerful force for transformative change in South Africa's socio-economic landscape. ■

**Sarah Mokwebo** is an activist, feminist and writer focusing on gender equality, climate justice and inclusive development in Africa's financial, infrastructure, and industrial landscapes.



The **Transformation Fund** is a proposed partnership between government and the private sector to accelerate the participation and sustainability of **black-owned businesses across South Africa**. The Fund aims to aggregate empowerment resources into a coordinated, high-impact initiative.





# Zero Road Fatalities Over Easter: A Leadership Triumph in Limpopo

■ By **DR. CHE SELANE**

**I**N a historic and heartening turn of events, the Limpopo Province recorded zero road fatalities during the Easter 2025 holiday season. This extraordinary outcome not only defies the grim statistics of previous years but also sets a benchmark for road safety strategies across South Africa. It is a powerful testament to what strategic leadership, interdepartmental collaboration, and community mobilisation can achieve when combined with a clear vision and unwavering political will.

Nestled at the northernmost tip of South Africa, Limpopo serves as a key transit corridor linking Gauteng to the rest of Southern Africa. Major routes like the N1 carry thousands of vehicles dai-

ly, especially during peak travel seasons, connecting South Africa to Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Mozambique. Yet, this advantageous position has historically come with a deadly cost.

The province's vast rural landscape, underdeveloped road infrastructure in some areas, and behavioural challenges such as speeding, reckless driving, and alcohol abuse, have made Limpopo a hotbed for road accidents, especially during long weekends and holiday periods like Easter.

Against this backdrop, the absence of a single road death during Easter 2025 is nothing short of transformative. For the first time in recent memory, Limpopo emerged from a major

travel period without the usual reports of road carnage. According to the Limpopo Department of Transport and the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), not a single fatality was recorded province-wide over the Easter weekend. This was not by chance, it was the outcome of deliberate and visionary leadership at all levels of government, supported by robust public engagement and law enforcement visibility.

The cornerstone of this achievement was active and visible leadership. The Premier of Limpopo, Hon. Dr. Phophi Ramathuba, along with Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and the Provincial Legislature, were deployed across the province, en-

gaging with communities, monitoring roads, and overseeing enforcement operations. Their presence signalled that the state was not only issuing directives but standing shoulder-to-shoulder with communities.

This proactive leadership approach boosted public confidence, inspired responsible road behaviour, and reinforced the seriousness of the safety campaign. It showed that leadership is not merely about making speeches but about being present where it matters most.

Beyond political deployment, the success of the Easter campaign was driven by a multifaceted approach involving; pre-emptive public awareness campaigns tailored for rural and urban communities alike, strategic partnerships with taxi associations, churches, and community forums, real-time traffic monitoring and rapid response units across high-risk zones, data-driven decision-making, allowing targeted deployment of resources and personnel.

Crucially, communities were not passive recipients but active partners in the campaign. Traditional leaders, youth formations, and local activists helped spread safety messages, monitor compliance, and encourage a culture of mutual accountability.

One of the most significant outcomes, beyond the statistics, was the observable change in road user behaviour. Taxi drivers adhered to rest breaks and speed limits; private motorists showed improved discipline; pedestrians were more cautious. These changes reflect the power of consistent messaging and visible enforcement, as well as the impact of community-led ac-

countability.

The Easter 2025 success story must not be a once-off. It provides a replicable model for other high-risk periods such as Christmas, school holidays, and long weekends. To sustain and expand on these gains, Limpopo must institutionalise the following practices:

- Formalise the physical deployment of political and administrative leaders during peak periods.
- Continue fostering collaboration between transport, health, safety, and municipal departments.
- Deepen partnerships with civil society, traditional authorities, and youth structures.
- Invest in digital systems to track incidents, compliance, and public sentiment in real time.
- Train public servants, traffic officials, and local leaders in ethical leadership and road safety advocacy.
- Empower the Provincial Legislature's portfolio committees to monitor and report on road safety initiatives.

Moreover, the zero-fatality Easter of 2025 is a beacon of hope and a model of what effective leadership and cohesive governance can achieve. It demonstrates that road safety is not merely a traffic issue, it is a developmental, ethical, and governance imperative.

The Limpopo Provincial Government, under the leadership of Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba and the collective strength of its institutions and communities, has rewritten the province's road safety narrative. This moment should serve as a rallying call: when leadership leads from the front, communities follow, and lives are saved.

Let Easter 2025 be remembered not only for what didn't happen, but for what was made possible through visionary leadership, accountability, and the unwavering spirit of the people of Limpopo. ■

*Dr. Che Selane is a Member of the Limpopo Provincial Legislature and writes in his capacity as a public leader committed to developmental governance and public safety.*





# RENEWING THE SPIRIT OF BANDUNG: 70 YEARS ON

■ By **ALVIN BOTES**

**S**EVENTY years ago, from 18–24 April 1955, a bold assembly took place in Bandung, Indonesia. Twenty-nine newly independent African and Asian nations were united in defiance of colonial domination and Cold War bipolarity. The ANC also attended and was represented by Comrades Moses Kotane and Molvi Cachalia. This historic gathering, the Bandung Conference, marked the first significant-scale Afro-Asian summit dedicated to multilateralism, mutual cooperation, peaceful coexistence and national sovereignty of states.

Bandung was revolutionary. It asserted the rights of developing nations to sovereignty and self-determination, guided by visionary leaders such as Indonesia's Sukarno, India's Jawaharlal Nehru, Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser, Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, and China's Zhou Enlai. Central to the conference were ten guiding principles – Dasasila Bandung – which remain relevant to this day.

These principles are:

1. Respect for fundamental human rights and UN Charter principles.
2. Respect for sovereignty and



territorial integrity.

3. Recognition of racial and national equality.
4. Non-interference in internal affairs.
5. Respect for national defence rights under UN norms.
6. Rejection of collective defence serving major powers and pressures against nations.
7. Refraining from aggression or threats against territorial or political independence.
8. Peaceful resolution of international disputes.
9. Promotion of mutual interests and cooperation.
10. Commitment to justice and international obligations.

Bandung positioned nations of the global south as architects of their own destinies, breaking away from economic dependency on industrialized powers. For the first time, the colonised convened independently, shaping their role in global affairs. This act of geo-political resistance birthed the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) which advocated and continues to advance dignity, equality, co-operation and justice.

Today, the geo-political and economic landscape is in a consistent state of flux undergoing a tectonic shift. We navigate a world in the midst of poly crisis – wars, inequality, ecological collapse. There is a resurgence of narrow economic and political nationalism, racism, sexism, xenophobia, autocracy,



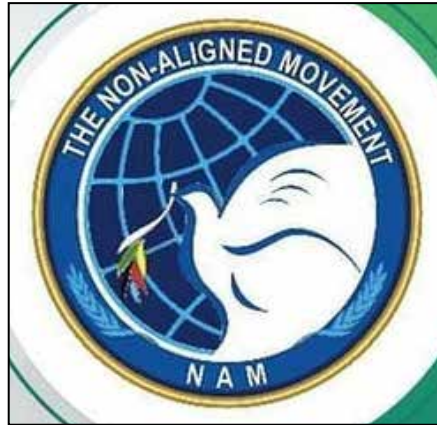
## INTERNATIONAL

violent extremism and right-wing populism. Unilateralism is on the rise and multilateralism and its institutions face existential threats as currencies, tariffs, and trade become weapons in great-power rivalries. Historical geopolitical and regional alliances are shifting and no longer premised on principles and ideology.

In this fractured and volatile present, the Bandung principles offer not nostalgia but an essential blueprint for a more just, inclusive, equal, dignified and peaceful future. The spirit of Bandung – solidarity among the oppressed, south-south cooperation, and an equitable, inclusive, just, peaceful, stable and sovereign global order – remains urgently relevant. It emphasises that genuine peace, security and development cannot be imposed externally but must emerge from within.

Firstly, active non-alignment must be revived – not passive neutrality, but principled independence from imperialist pressures. Global south nations must reject bullying and coercion from major powers, anchoring foreign policies in justice, solidarity, and sovereignty. South Africa, for example, must resist choosing between Washington and Beijing, charting instead an independent policy based on our own historic concentric principles of Pan-Africanism, anti-imperialism, human rights, international law, peaceful resolution of conflict, multilateralism and international solidarity.

Secondly, Bandung underscores the necessity of deeper south-south cooperation. Initiatives like BRICS, AfCFTA, the New Development Bank and alternative global payment systems to the SWIFT, reflect this legacy but must extend beyond trade into education, sci-



ence, culture and grassroots solidarity. These systems must prioritise justice, equality, inclusivity, ecological sustainability and decolonial values.

Thirdly, mutual respect and non-interference remain critical amid the new cold war and great power rivalry that is finding expression through, hybrid warfare, propaganda and proxy conflicts. Human rights must not be weaponized for regime change or unilateral sanctions. Bandung reminds us peace is inseparable from self-determination – from Palestine to Western Sahara.

Fourthly, Bandung provides a moral framework to confront global apartheid. Vaccine nationalism, climate injustice, restrictive migration policies and Israeli apartheid starkly reveal ongoing global racial hierarchies. Addressing historical injustices through reparations for slavery, colonialism, land and climate damages aligns fundamentally with Bandung's ethical core.

Reclaiming Bandung today means not merely remembering but renewing its spirit. A **"Bandung 2.0"** is urgent and necessary, led and driven by the NAM. However it must also involve both state and non-state actors – youth, women, indigenous communities, artists, intellectuals, trade unions,

business and civil society. Alternatives to economic extraction, patriarchy, racism, sexism and imperialism must be imagined and pursued collectively.

Bandung 2.0 must also integrate intersectional and ecological justice. The climate crisis demands a global pact rooted in solidarity, demanding debt cancellation, financing just transitions, and protecting frontline communities. Additionally, it must fight fiercely in defence of multilateralism, multipolarity, and multiculturalism, countering the reactionary forces of unilateralism and narrow economic and political nationalism.

As we commemorate Bandung's 70th anniversary, we must not merely recall but boldly and bravely renew its spirit. Just as the delegates in 1955 courageously defied imperial intimidation, we too must confront today's challenges and bullies with determination, steadfastness and resilience.

OR Tambo, our former foremost diplomat, articulated this enduring spirit eloquently in Lusaka in 1979 when he said:

*"The spirit of Bandung is not dead. It lives on in the struggles of the oppressed peoples of the world. It lives on in the determination of the peoples of Southern Africa to be free."*

Let us heed Tambo's words as our moral compass, boldly renewing Bandung's vision and spirit, carrying forward its legacy with courage and solidarity. ■

**Alvin Botes** is a member of the NEC, Deputy Minister of International Relations & Co-operation and serves on the NEC subcommittee on International Relations.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

3–9 May 2025

Source: SA History Online, O'Malley Archives, Africa Today/Yesterday, The Africa Factbook and Amazwi SA Museum of Literature

### 3 May 1896 Pasteur Institute of Dakar established

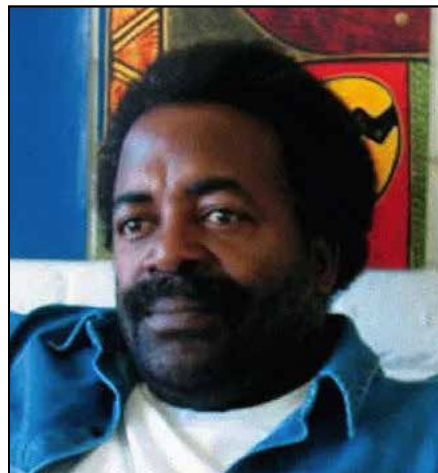
The Institute was established as a research facility in Senegal, with its research initially focusing on dysentery. It was the first institute to isolate the Yellow Fever virus, catapulting it as a leading research facility for public health in West Africa. It is also amongst the few institutions on the African continent which produces vaccines.

### 3 May 1988 SA, Angola, Cuba, USA negotiations start about Namibian independence

Representatives of South Africa, the United States (US), Angola and Cuba met in London (3–4 May) in search of a solution to the Angolan war and independence for Namibia. These negotiations heralded the end of foreign intervention in the war in Angola and the ultimate independence of South West Africa/Namibia. Neil van Heerden, SA director general of foreign affairs, led the South African delegation. The meetings, hosted by the US and led by Chester Crocker, took place in the informal atmosphere of London coffee shops in various venues. Also present at the first meeting at the coffee station at Brown's Hotel, were Gen. Jannie Geldenhuys (South Africa), Gen. Rosales del Toro (Cuba) and Antonio Dos Santos Franca 'Ndalú' (Angola). This meeting was followed in the

same month by meetings in Congo-Brazzaville and the groundbreaking Cairo summit.

### 3 May 1963 Artist Sfiso Mkame born



Justice Sfiso Mkame was born in Cleremont, Durban, drawing on sand walls as a child. He received formal art training at the Open School and the Little E Theatre in Durban. In 1986 he was a student teacher in screen-printing at the Community Arts Workshop. Mkame preferred oil pastel and screen-print media. He gained fame in 1988 when he sold his *'Letters to God'* series of drawings to the South African National Gallery in Cape Town. In 1996 he held his first solo exhibition at the BAT Centre in Durban and has exhibited extensively since then. His work is described as "a decorative, stylized approach that resembles African textile... he builds up dense layers of colour with oil pastels and then scratches

patterns into the pastel to create images, symbols and designs.."

### 3 May 1991 Windhoek Declaration on Press Freedom in Africa adopted

At the end of a UNESCO seminar on World Press Freedom Day held in Windhoek, Namibia – journalists and other participants adopted the Windhoek Declaration on the role of media in Africa, and the importance of press freedom and freedom of information.

### 4 May 1843 Natal Colony established

Britain established the Natal Colony, setting the scene for several wars with the Kingdom of Zululand and eventual conquest, incorporating Zulu lands.

### 4 May 1925 Ruth First born



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Ruth Heloise First, journalist, activist, academic, author and member of the ANC and SACP is born in Johannesburg. Her parents, immigrants from Lithuania were communists, and Ruth joined the Young Left Wing Book Club at age 14 and after matriculating from Jeppe Girls High, she became active in the student movement at Wits University. She was a founding member of the Congress of Democrats, and was part of the drafting committee for the Freedom Charter in 1955. She was amongst the accused in the 1956 Treason trial, was arrested and left for exile in 1964 with her small children. She spend some time in the UK and after Mozambique independence in 1975, took up the post as Director for Research at the Eduardo Mondlane university in Maputo in 1977. First was editor-in-chief of *The Guardian*, later banned, and also editor of *Fighting Talk*, a publication of the SACP. Ruth First was the author of books ***South West Africa*** (1963); ***117 Days*** (1965); ***The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup d'etat in Africa*** (1970); ***Libya: The Elusive Revolution*** (1970); ***The Mozambican Miner: Proletarian and Peasant*** (1983); and co-edited ***The South African Connection: Western Investment in Apartheid*** (1972). Ruth First paid the ultimate price when she was assassinated by the regime in Maputo on 17 August 1982.

### 4 May 1928

#### Hosni Mubarak, former Egyptian President born

Muhammad Hosni El Sayed Mubarak was born on 4 May 1928 in Kafr-El-Meslha. After finishing high school, he joined the Egyptian Military Academy, where he received a bachelor's degree in Military Science. He later joined



the Egyptian Air force where he served in various units, earning a degree in Aviation Science during this period. After completing aviation training in Russia, he served as a commander at many Egyptian air force bases and installations. He rose to the fourth President of Egypt in 1981, after Anwar Sadat was assassinated. He served as Egyptian president for nearly 30 years, from 1981 to 2011, when he was deposed during the Arab spring. Mubarak stood trial and was sentenced to life imprisonment in 2013, a sentence overturned by the courts in 2015, and he was finally released in 2017. Mubarak died on 20 February 2020.

### 4 May 1934

#### Author José Luandino Vieira born

The Angolan writer of short stories, José Luandino Vieira was born on this day. His stories reflected the African oral tradition, and he became known for his acclaimed short story *Luanda*, published in 1963. His portrayal of colonial rule saw his work banned by the Portuguese. His first novel, ***The Real Life of Domingos Xavier*** was published in 1961, and his second, ***Nos, os do Makuhtsu (We, from Maku-lusu)*** is regarded by some as his best work.

### 4 May 1942

#### British troops land in Madagascar

Madagascar, a mountainous large island in the Indian Ocean, was previously a French colony controlled by the French Vichy government. The British were afraid that the French, would allow Japan to set up military bases on the Island. If this happened, it would have seriously threatened its sea routes leading to India and Ceylon. On 4 May 1942 British troops landed in the Bay Ambararata Mail, just west of the port of Diego Suarez at the northern tip of Madagascar. Britain then attacked its ally, France. The British decided to capture Madagascar, and handed it over to the Free French to control in order to consolidate their own routes to the East safely.

### 4 May 1960

#### Sobukwe sentenced

Robert Sobukwe, President of the Pan Africanist Congress, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for incitement of Africans to urge the repeal of pass laws. He refused to appeal, as he had refused the aid of an attorney, on the grounds that the court had no jurisdiction over him because it could not be considered either a court of law or a court of justice.

### 4 May 1966

#### Black Panther

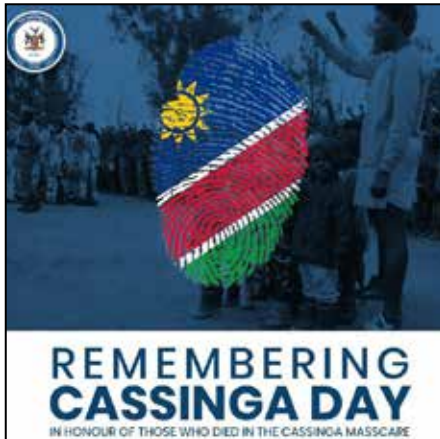
The first African superhero, ***The Black Panther***, debuts in Marvel Comic's *Fantastic Four* (no.52, cover date July 1966). The story is set in fictional Wakanda, with superior technology keeping its capabilities secret. The Black Panther hero is king T'Challa. The comic has been serialized in two block-busting films, the first after the comic title in 2018 and the second ***Wakanda Forever*** in 2022.



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

### 4 May 1978

#### SADF attacks Namibian refugee camp in Cassinga, Angola



On 4 May 1978, the South African air force flew over Cassinga, a Namibian refugee camp in Southern Angola. Close to 400 SADF paratroopers were dropped near the town of Cassinga. The airborne troops bombed the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) refugee camp and People's Liberation Army of Namibia's (PLAN) military base, SWAPO's armed wing. The bombing was followed by ground forces to complete the massacre. More than 600 Namibians, mostly women and children were massacred by the SADF airborne troops, and hundreds more were injured. A United Nations (UN) delegation that visited Cassinga a few days after the tragic event reported that what the South Africans did was criminal in legal terms and savage in moral terms. The 4 May is now called Cassinga Day and is a national public holiday in Namibia.

### 4 May 1994

#### Peace accord for Palestinian self-rule in Gaza, Jericho

On this day, Israeli Labour Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin and PLO leader Yasser Arafat sign a peace accord to ensure Palestin-



ian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, also known as the Oslo Accords. Together with Shimon Peres, the two leaders received the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize. A year later, Rabin was assassinated by a Zionist extremist.

### 4 May 2007

#### Former Zambian President convicted

President Frederick Chiluba is convicted of stealing 46 million USD from the country's treasury, allegedly sending it to his London bank account in a civil case. Two years later, in August 2009, Chiluba was cleared by a Zambian court in Lusaka of corruption and embezzling of 500,000 USD, with the judge ruling that the funds could not be traced to government money.

### 4 May 2018

#### Attack on Timbuktu

The Ansar Dine Islamic group occupied Timbuktu and went on the rampage in the city, destroying ancient archeological treasures, including UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Ancient documents in the city were saved and hidden away by Malian librarians and other volunteers, captured in the book *The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu* (2021).

### 4 May 2021

#### Nigerian director released Zoom movie



The film *Heart2Heart* by Nigerian director Obi Emelonye is the first commercial movie released on the internet platform Zoom. Emelonye shot the movie during the Covid-19 pandemic, gathering actors on Zoom to produce the story.

### 5 May 1925

#### Afrikaans declared an official language

The language originally developed from Dutch after colonization by settlers from the Netherlands. The language developed and was used by settlers, slaves and traders, and also influenced by indigenous languages, including Khoisan languages. Afrikaans became the spark for the 1976 student uprisings, when it was introduced as a forced language of instruction in black schools. According to StatsSA Community Survey (2018), 12.2% of the population speaks Afrikaans.

### 5 May 1930

#### National Museum of Fine Arts of Algiers opens doors

Set in an impressive garden, the Musée des Beaux-Arts d'Alger (National Museum of Fine Arts of Algiers) opens its doors to the public for the first time. It is regarded as one of the largest art

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

museums in Africa. By 2022, the museum houses over 4000 artworks, including prominent Algerian artists such as Baya, Yelles and Racim. Today it houses over 8,000 artworks.

### 5 May 1952 **Feminist Author Hafsat Abdulwaheed born**

Nigerian writer and women's rights activist was born on this day in Kano City, Nigeria. She was the first Hausa woman to publish a novel and has written more than 30 books, fiction, non-fiction and poetry. She made an unsuccessful attempt at political office in Northern Nigeria, where no woman held high office.

### 5 May 1953 **Egypt becomes a Republic**

A recommendation by the Egyptian Constitutional Commission that the 5,000-year-old monarchy ruled by Pharos be ended adopted. Egypt became a republic on this day.

### 5 May 1960 **Kenneth Kaunda meets Martin Luther King**

Zambian independence leader Kenneth Kaunda meets US civil rights leader Martin Luther King in Atlanta, Georgia forging ties between the African liberation and Civil Rights movement.

### 5 May 1971 **Musician Franco born**

Frank Losokwane, King of Rumba was born on this day in Gabane, Botswana. A prolific recording artist, he has released more than 18 albums since 2001, when he formed his band Franco and Afro Musica, performing kwasa kwasa music.

### 5 May 1978 **Journalist Redi Tlhabi born**

South African journalist and broadcaster, was born on this day in Soweto. A pioneer reporter on gender based violence, she works in broadcasting at home and recently with the BBC News, and published her award-winning memoirs in Endings and Beginnings (2021). Tlhabi is also an ultra-marathon runner.

### 5 May 1983 **Tricameral Constitution passed**



The Apartheid Government passed the third South African constitution, which introduced a racist tricameral system, where Indians and Coloureds vote for segregated parliaments. This, along with the racist Black Local Authority Act, prompted the United Democratic Front in August 1983, a broad front of anti-apartheid organisations, which called for the boycott of the tricameral parliament elections, organising under the slogan **UDF Unites, Apartheid Divides**.

### 5 May 2018 **Truth about farm attacks**

After global rightwing groups claims that attacks on white South African farmers are so widespread that it constitutes 'white genocide', the SA Police Services

released crime statistics, showing that white South Africans make up 8.1% of South Africa's murder victims, a smaller percentage than their representation of the country's population (9%).

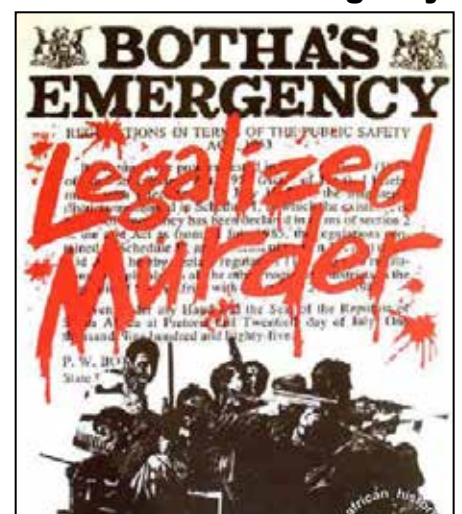
### 6 May 1945 **Biking Minister born**

Ojo Maduekwa, Nigerian foreign minister (2007–2010) was born in Abia state. As Tourism minister he advocated bicycles for use in crowded cities and countryside. The Minister cycled to work every day, even after a bus pushed him off the road and into a ditch.

### 6 May 1959 **Congo adopts new flag**

The Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) ahead of independence adopts a new national flag, green for the forests and agriculture, yellow friendships of nobility of the people, and red as part of the Pan African movement.

### 6 May 1960 **18,000 people arrested under State of Emergency**



Parliament received reports that 18,000 persons had been arrested and detained since the proclamation of the emergency on 30 March 1960.



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

**6 May 1994**

### Diplomatic relations with West African states

The democratic government signs agreements establishing diplomatic relations with Ghana, Mali and Senegal. These countries cut ties with apartheid South Africa after independence and only resumed links after the end of apartheid in 1994.

**6 May 1994**

### First democratic elections results announced

Judge Johann Kriegler announces the final results of the first democratic elections, one week after elections. Despite major problems of fraud in KZN, Judge Kriegler announced the elections *'substantially free and fair.'*

**6 May 2016**

### Kigali Convention Centre hosts first event

The stunning Kigali International Convention Centre finally opened its doors to host its first event, the World Economic Forum on Africa. The multipurpose 32,200 m<sup>2</sup> has become an important landmark of the Rwandan capital.

**7 May 1955**

### Actress Sharlene Surty-Richards born



The South African actress was born on this day in Upington, in the Northern Cape. She is known for her roles on television soap operas such as *Egoli* and the well-received, classic movie *Fie-la se Kind* (1988). Surty-Richards passed on in June 2021.

**7 May 1985**

### Arusha Conference on Women and Children under Apartheid

The Arusha International Conference on "Women and Children under Apartheid" was convened by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Government of Tanzania, as part of the activities of the OAU in support of the struggle in South Africa.

**7 May 1987**

### Cosatu House bombed



Early morning on 7 May 1987, two large bombs ripped through the basement of COSATU House in Johannesburg. Although no one was killed, the badly damaged building was declared a health hazard and Cosatu and affiliates forced to vacate offices. In 1998, former Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok with 22 members of the former security police appeared before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to apply for amnesty for their involvement in the Cosatu House bombing.

**7 May 2006**

### Minister Stella Sigcau passed on



Former Transkei Prime Minister and Minister of Public Work Stella Sigcau died at Durban's St Augustine Hospital at the age of 69. In 1994 first-post apartheid government she was appointed Minister of Public Enterprise and in 1999, when President Thabo Mbeki reshuffled his cabinet, she was given the ministerial of Public works. Mme Sicqua was also a member of the NEC of the ANC.

**8 May 1921**

### Afrikaans replaces Dutch

The replacement of Dutch by Afrikaans as official language of South Africa is approved by a joint sitting of Parliament, one month after JBM Hertzog becomes prime minister.

**8 May 1934**

### Prof Sibusiso Bhengu, first democratic Minister of Education born

The first national minister of education in South Africa's Government of National Unity (GNU), Prof. Sibusiso Mandlenkosi Emmanuel Bhengu was born in Kranskop, Natal. In 1969 he founded the Dlangenzwa High School near Empangeni and was



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

the Principal of the school until 1976. He completed a PhD in Political Science at the University of Geneva in 1974 and was appointed as a Professor in 1977 at the University of Zululand. He served as general secretary of the IFP, and left South Africa in 1978 to take up a position as Secretary for Research and Social Action for the Lutheran World Foundation. He returned to South Africa in 1991 and became the Vice-chancellor of Fort Hare University. In 1994 he was appointed Minister of Education and in 1999 as Ambassador to Germany.

### 8 May 1996

#### Adoption of South Africa's Constitution

The democratic Constitution of South Africa is adopted by Parliament. The constitution with its bill of rights addresses the legacy of the past, as well as guarantee political, civil, socio-economic and environmental rights, the form of government and the



role of different spheres of government. On this day, then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki also made his historic, *"I am an African"* speech to Parliament.

### 8 May 1977

#### Djibouti votes for independence

Voters in French Somaliland approve a referendum calling for independence from France by a near unanimous 98.8% Yes vote. The colony formally became independent on 27 June 1977, with the name Djibouti.

### 9 May 1950

#### Bhawani Sannyassi Dayal passed on

Bhawani Sannyassi Dayal, journalist and campaigner for Indian rights in SA, died in Ajmer, India. Dayal was one of the organisers of the Indian strike led by Mohandas Gandhi at Newcastle in 1913, and was a representative of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC).

### 9 May 1966

#### Bram Fischer sentenced to life imprisonment

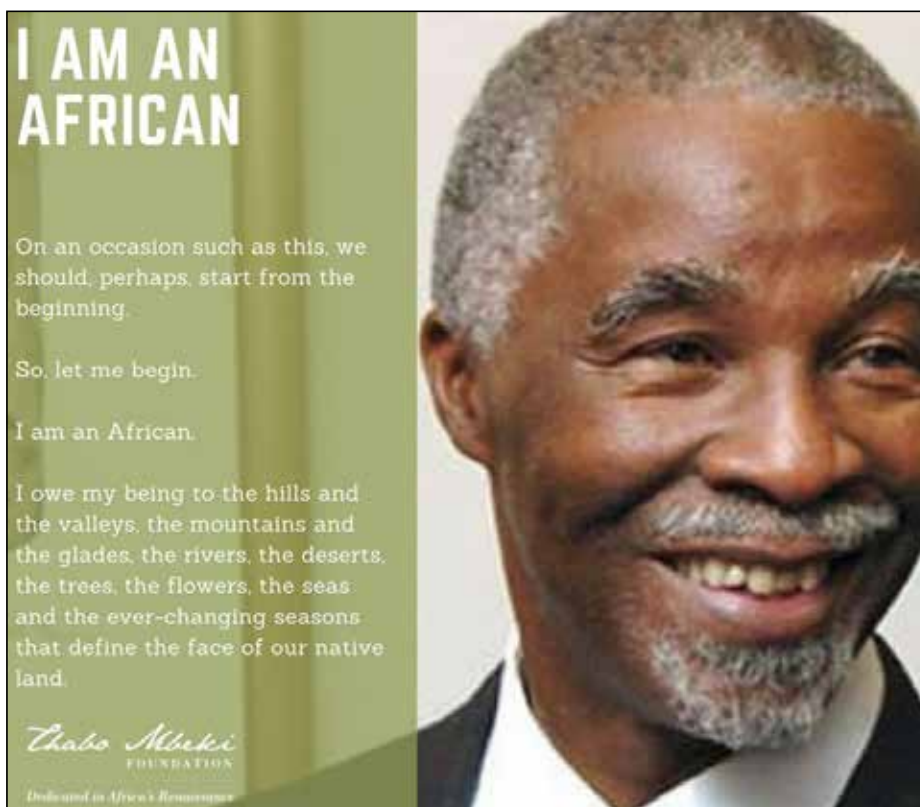


Bram Fischer, was arrested in 1964 for being a member of the banned Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA). After released on bail, he went underground until re-captured in Johannesburg on 11 November 1965. On 23 March 1966 his trial began in Pretoria. Fischer was convicted of conspiring with Umkhonto weSizwe to commit sabotage and violating the Suppression of Communism Act. On 9 May 1966 he was sentenced to life imprisonment for his political activities and 24 years for being a member of the CPSA.

### 9 May 1995

#### Kinshasa under Ebola quarantine

Kinshasa, capital of Zaire (now DRC) is placed under quarantine after a deadly Ebola virus outbreak.



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

**9 May 2004**

**Brenda Fassie, Queen of Afropop passed away**



Brenda Fassie, beloved music icon and diva passed away in hospital in Johannesburg. Fassie with her unique voice and personality dominated South African music scene since the 1980s until her untimely death, with such hits as *Weekend Special*, *Nomakanjani*, *Black President*, *Vul'indlela*, and *Amagents*, to name but a few. A book of reflections on her life, *I'm not Your Weekend Special*, by Bongani Madondo was published in 2014, a decade after her passing.

## VERBATIM

“It is our responsibility to break down the barriers of division and create a country where there shall be neither Whites nor Blacks, just South Africans, free and united in diversity.”

**PRESIDENT O.R. TAMBO**

## INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

3—9 May 2025

Source: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org), [www.au.int](http://www.au.int), *The Africa Fact Book* (2020), [www.daysoftheyear.com](http://www.daysoftheyear.com)

**3 May**

**World Press Freedom Day**

3 May acts as a reminder to governments of the need to respect their commitment to press freedom a day of reflection among media professionals about issues of press freedom and professional ethics. World Press Freedom Day is also a day of support for media which are under threat and a day of remembrance for those journalists who lost their lives in the pursuit of



a story. This year the World Press Freedom Day global commemoration will focus on the profound influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on journalism and media under the theme: **Reporting in the Brave New World – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media**. AI is transforming journalism, providing tools that enhance investigative reporting, content creation, and fact-checking. It allows for greater efficiency, multilingual accessibility, and improved data analysis. However, these advancements also bring risks: AI-generated misinformation and disinformation, deepfake technology, biased content moderation, and surveillance threats to journalists. Additionally, AI's role in the media business model raises concerns about fair remuneration for journalistic content and media viability.

**WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY 2025**

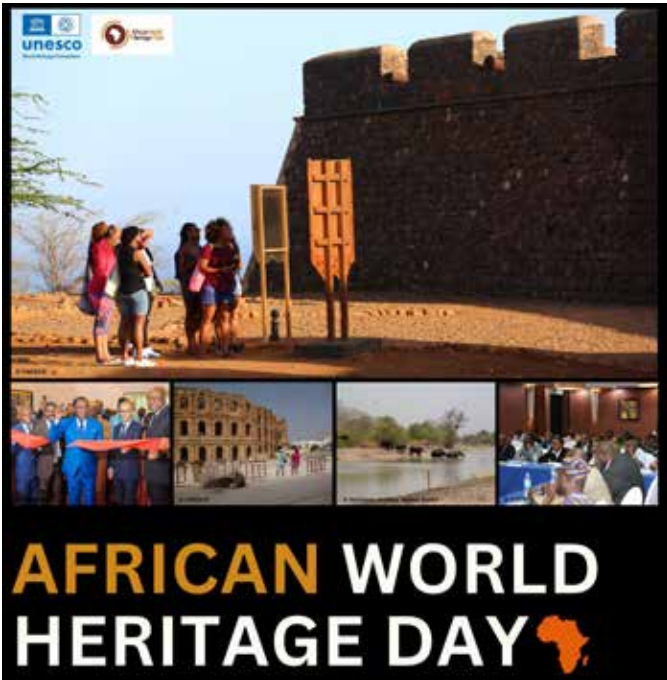
*Reporting in the Brave New World - The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media*



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

### 5 May

#### African World Heritage Day

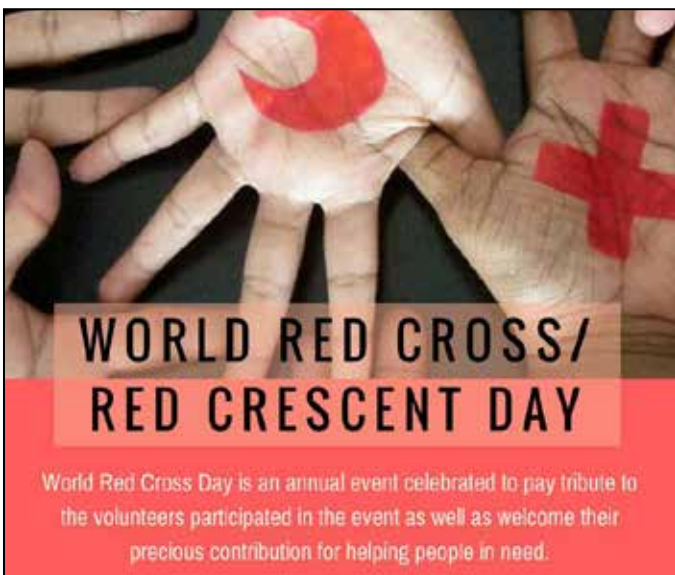


While Africa is underrepresented on the World Heritage List (African properties account for some 12% of all inscribed sites worldwide), a disproportionately high percentage (39%) of these properties are on the World Heritage List in Danger. Faced with various contemporary threats such as climate change, uncontrolled development, poaching, civil unrest and instability, many of Africa's wonders risk losing their outstanding universal value.

### 8 May

#### World Red Crescent and Red Cross Day

Each year Red Cross and Red Crescent Day is celebrated on 8 May. This is to commemorate those



who volunteer their time in assisting these organisations in caring for vulnerable communities. The Red Cross Society was founded in 1863 after Henry Dunant; a Swiss national, who witnessed the suffering of the wounded, dying, and displaced in a battle in Northern Italy. The Red Cross or Crescent work worldwide as volunteers in public good and charitable causes, as well as disaster situations and conflicts. The Red Cross played a major role in reducing incidence of measles by campaigning for vaccination, and in the fight to eradicate malaria. The Red Cross is a Christian symbol, and in Muslim countries, the Red Crescent is the symbol of this organization. In Iran, the local chapter uses the symbol of the Red Lion and Sun.

### 8 May

#### World Ovarian Cancer Day

Ovarian cancer occurs in the ovaries – containing human egg cells in women – causing a host of complications and is often misdiagnosed, causing deaths of over 140,000 women a year, if not diagnosed and treated early.

### 8-9 May

#### Second World War Remembrance Day



The Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives during the Second World War (May 8 and May 9) is an annual international day of remembrance designated by Resolution 59/26 of the United Nations General Assembly on November 22, 2004. The resolution urges "Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and individuals" to pay tribute to the victims of World



War II. It begins on May 8, the anniversary of the date when the World War II Allies accepted the unconditional surrender of the armed forces of Nazi Germany and the end of Adolf Hitler's Third Reich. The Second World War took place from 1939-1945, engulfed nearly the entire globe, although the main conflict was between Germany, Italy and Japan on the one hand, and the Allies, which included the France, Great Britain, the USA, the Soviet Union and to a lesser extent, China. With over 40 million civilian deaths and 20 million soldiers who died. Nearly half of all deaths were in the Soviet Union alone; it was not only the world's largest conflict, but also its bloodiest. It became one of the watershed moments of the twentieth century history, with the extension of the Soviet Union into eastern and central Europe, the shift in power away from Europe to the USA, the coming to power of Mao Zedong in China (1949), the initiation of the European common market, the growth of social democracy in Europe and the emergence of a bipolar world with two opposing ideological powers – the Soviet Union and the USA. The Second World War involved all of the European powers colonies, in the form of soldiers, invasions and financing the war, and with the Allies banner of a war against fascism and for freedom, raising hopes for independence struggles. Post the WW2, a number of

countries in Asia, Africa and the Americas gained their independence. WW2 Remembrance Day is commemorated across the world, since most countries lost soldiers. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists about 11,023 known white and black South African soldiers who lost their lives during the war.

### 8 May

#### World Migratory Bird Day

Scheduled for the second Sunday of every May, it is an annual awareness-raising campaign for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. It helps to raise global awareness of the threats faced by migratory birds, their ecological importance, and the need for international cooperation to conserve them. According to Birdlife South Africa, "migratory birds travel very long distances on their annual journeys, sometimes even tens of thousands of kilometres. The survival of migratory birds depends on the availability of well-connected networks or chains of habitats along their migration routes, which are used by birds for food and water." Migratory birds in South Africa include the colourful greater striped swallow, Amur Falcon, White Rumped Swift, White Stork, Pygmy Kingfisher, and the Blue crane.

