

The complete Statement of the National Executive Committee on the occasion of the 104th Anniversary of the African National Congress from which Jacob Zuma read extracts on 8 January 2016 in Rustenburg, North West

Read on the ANC website: <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=11874>

Comrades, compatriots, friends and invited guests,

The African National Congress was founded one-hundred-and-four years ago.

The ANC appreciates what a momentous achievement it is to still be strong and lead our society; to be vibrant and present and still to be the Movement that represents the interests and aspirations of the vast majority of the people of South Africa.

Let us also acknowledge the tremendous honour and responsibility on every single ANC member's shoulders to lead this country towards a South Africa that is truly united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous.

The ANC and the people of South Africa take this opportunity to commemorate the following anniversaries:

- One hundred years since the establishment of Fort Hare University: now a historic institution amongst whose alumni are our continent's greatest leaders, such as Prof ZK Matthews, ANC President Oliver Tambo, President Nelson Mandela, the late president of Botswana Sir Seretse Khama, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Comrade Robert Mugabe and the late Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Mr Ntsu Mokhetle. This monumental university continues to play a great role in grooming and nurturing young minds and future leaders.
- Ninety-five years since the formation of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), the forerunner of the South African Communist Party (SACP). The SACP remains the vanguard party of the working class and a valuable ally to the ANC.
- Sixty years since the Women's March to the Union Buildings, protesting against the inhumane and unjust pass laws. The famous call of the women of that day Wathint'abafazi Wathint'imbokodo resonates to this day!

- We raise our revolutionary banner in honour of the people’s army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, which was formed fifty-five years ago and which bravely led the armed struggle against the apartheid regime.
- This year marks the fortieth year since the Soweto students uprisings during which thousands of students protested against apartheid’s brutal and unjust laws.
- Thirty years ago the apartheid police and military waged brutal campaigns against our people, which resulted in the “Alexandra Six Day War”.
- The Gugulethu Seven were tragically and callously killed during an operation planned with the help of askaris thirty years ago.
- On 20 August 2016, we will be marking twenty-five years since the United Democratic Front (UDF) announced that it had fulfilled its purpose, as one of the four pillars of our Struggle and resolved to join forces with the ANC to pursue our goal of building the South African nation.
- Twenty-five years ago, the ANC led all progressive forces at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), leading to a peaceful transition from apartheid to a democratic and free society.

As South Africans, we continue to commemorate our history as it is the foundation on which we build our Movement and our country.

THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

Our Movement pursues the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) with the strategic goal of putting in place a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, and prosperous South Africa.

The ANC’s Strategy and Tactics makes it absolutely clear that the NDR seeks to build a National Democratic Society based on the best in human civilisation in terms of political and human freedoms, socio-economic rights, value systems and identity. In pursuing the NDR during the current phase, the ANC understands the connection between political and socio-economic challenges and therefore we have crafted plans to lead the people in pursuing our common aspirations. We are ensuring that sectoral interests are linked to strategic objectives and national goals. Therefore, it is important that cadres and leaders of the ANC conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of revolutionary morality.

Our journey towards attaining the National Democratic Society continues. Every South African, acting in unity, will enable us to attain the National Democratic Society. Our Constitution, based on human rights values enshrines rights, duties and responsibilities for every citizen. The National Development Plan, our Vision 2030 was embraced by the vast majority of South Africans as a blueprint. This NDP outlines many of the features of a national democratic society. We have opted for a capable developmental state, which is accessible and offers efficient social services, a growing economy, a skilled population and low levels of unemployment and inequality.

Everything we do, as South Africans must be aimed at fulfilling Vision 2030. Working together, in a social compact, we can bring together all sectors of society to attain this objective.

The ANC therefore calls upon all citizens to contribute to building a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society. This is a task of every South African.

United in Peoples' Power

A strong and united Movement is necessary to take the country forward. The ANC will continue to honour its responsibilities as leader of our society. Our task is to unite the broadest cross-section of people behind our common vision.

The ANC will remain rooted among our people and address their concerns in meaningful and constructive ways.

Let us be reminded of the profound wisdom of comrade OR Tambo in Durban, 1991: "We have devotedly watched over the organisation all these years. We now hand it back to you, bigger, stronger and intact. Guard our precious Movement."

We must therefore always remember that the ANC belongs to the people and we exist to serve them. ANC policies, traditions and values must be the touchstone in the daily lives of every ANC cadre. The ANC is more than its membership and we must be diligent in protecting the image of this glorious movement.

We must unite all the people of South Africa; black and white. There is room in the ANC for everyone.

Our 2015 National General Council (NGC) was clear that the ANC must address corruption and wastage, perceptions of corruption and all other tendencies that affect the standing of the Movement. Tendencies such as factionalism, careerism, gate-keeping, slate politics and other divisive practices have no place in the ANC shaped by its forebears. We remind those who continue to perpetuate division and counter-revolution within our Movement that there is no place for them.

The ANC Women's League continues to champion women's issues and to fight for the total emancipation of women and gender equality. It will unite women to advance their interests, fight gender stereotypes and bring about a fairer dispensation where women's issues are given the same prominence and attention as that given to other social issues. We congratulate the ANCWL for creating a special forum for young women.

The ANC Youth League is a militant voice of young people throughout the country. The Youth League is the birthplace of future leaders of the Movement and must remain a disciplined force, which unites all the youth of South Africa. A task of the Youth League is to ensure that youth development remains a fundamental part of the ANC programme. They must focus on mobilising young people to become active agents of economic empowerment, education and social upliftment.

The ANC Veterans League is an important guiding light in preserving the traditions and history of our Movement and should be the home of all veterans and stalwarts of the ANC. Our veterans serve as a

moral compass for all younger members. ANC members must strive to emulate the examples of veterans such as Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe Andrew Mlangeni and Ahmed Kathrada and other stalwarts such as Sophie de Bruyn and Frene Ginwala, who are still serving our Movement to this day.

The ANC-led Alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO), is one of the oldest and enduring political alliances of its kind in the world. Our alliance is founded on a common commitment to attain the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution.

As Comrade OR Tambo stated, our alliance was born out of struggle and not through the signing of pacts at conference tables. It is a living alliance and continues to set the terms for our dynamic and ongoing unity in action. The Alliance must adapt to the continuous changes of terrains of struggle and advances that we make.

We require a strong and united nation that works together to attain our strategic objectives of eradicating poverty, creating employment and eliminating inequality.

We call upon all sectors of society: the intelligentsia, the artists, sports formations, organized labour, the business community and civil society to join hands with the ANC to build a united South Africa. Building our nation is a long-term task and every citizen and sector of society are called upon to contribute, each to the best of their ability. Every contribution to nation-building is important and helps our country to remain an outstanding example of what people, acting in unity, can accomplish.

We must constantly remind ourselves of the spirit of unity and Ubuntu that engulfed our nation during the Rugby World Cup in 1995, Africa Cup of Nations in 1996 and the successful hosting of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup. Today, the whole nation celebrates the successes of young South African sportspersons who continue to raise the South African flag.

Non-racial society

A non-racial society is one where humanity is seen as one and our diversity becomes a source of strength. The ANC has historically pursued the ideal of non-racialism as a South African reality.

Our beloved former president and icon of all humanity, Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe Nelson Mandela, said: “No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

South Africa’s history of apartheid and colonialism, characterised by a ‘racial hierarchy’ and systematic, institutionalised conquest and dispossession of the indigenous people of this country, is directly related to our current challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

While great progress has been made in reversing three centuries of colonial marginalisation and neglect, there is much more that needs to be done to speed up change.

We remain firm in our belief that we must take special measures to affirm and improve the conditions of the previously disadvantaged and discriminated. In this way, we shall build a new path, one that avoids replication and the entrenchment of past patterns of privilege and exclusion.

We have travelled a long way to finding each other as South Africans. The ANC calls on all people of this country to work together and defeat the demons of racialism and tribalism.

It is clear that there is a tiny minority that still harbours a desire for separate amenities and who idolise apartheid-era leaders who made our country the skunk of the world. These people do not represent the true character of the new South Africa. They are living in the past. The ANC has put in place the legislative instruments to prevent discrimination on the basis of race and this has gone a long way in dealing with the social ills associated with discrimination. However, building a non-racial society requires more than this. It requires a mind-set shift that respects the basic human dignity of all people and a commitment from everyone to consciously reject racism and narrow ethnic chauvinism.

We will continue to address the economic legacy of apartheid. Race and class are inextricably linked as the result of more than three hundred (300) years of systematic discrimination, dispossession and super-exploitation on the basis of race. There must be redress and ongoing active interventions to ensure that all our people benefit, equitably, from our freedom.

Economic Freedom must become a reality in our lifetime!

We shall ensure that we end racial exploitation in all its forms and wherever it occurs: in the workplace, in the education system, the health sector, in the administration of justice, in access to government services and in the private sector.

The ANC calls on all our structures to lead the debate on what makes us South African and we urge all the peace-loving citizens to join in the debate. We further call on ANC branches to develop specific campaigns against racism and to involve their communities, civil society and religious organisations in these campaigns.

Let us do introspection and talk about what unites us, what divides us and how the people of this country can advance together; united in our diversity. Let us then, in a great example of peoples' power, implement our agreements on building this great nation.

As the Freedom Charter says: South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white.

Non-sexism

The words of President OR Tambo, that South Africa will not be free until the women of this country are liberated, still rings true today. South Africa has very progressive legislation and policies aimed at eradicating discrimination and empowering women. There are many instances where the ANC and its government have been exemplary in what can be done to emancipate women. It is undeniable

that women have made tremendous strides over the past two decades. On the whole, women are much more empowered today than twenty-one years ago.

The ANC is the only organisation in the country which has declared gender equality in the election of its representatives. The ANC continues to work hard to ensure gender parity in all organs of state. The recent appointment of more women judges reaffirms the strides that the ANC is making in affirming women in the organs of the state. Sadly, the private sector lags behind when it comes to the effective utilization of all productive forces in society. Many boardrooms and many top management positions remain white male dominated. This must change.

Our society experiences unacceptable levels of violence against women and children. This type of violence reflects and reinforces inequalities between men and women, and compromises the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims and survivors.

It is the ANC's fundamental belief that our people must act in unity to eradicate all forms of violence from society; especially violence against women and children (both girls and boys). The criminal justice system needs to be more pro-active and supportive in engaging with victims and survivors.

Discrimination similarly affects members of our communities who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) in ways that are exceptionally harmful.

Despite the myriad of government, judicial, civil society and other resources available, women, the disabled and those in the LGBTI community continue to suffer from discrimination in its many forms. The ANC calls on its structures to be at the forefront of eradicating this type of discrimination and to take the lead in inculcating our progressive value system into communities. We call, especially, on the ANC Women's League to continue to emulate the spirit and courage of activists during the 1956 Women's March and to attack patriarchy and gender discrimination wherever it is found.

A Democratic South Africa

The maintenance of democracy comes through the exercise of every citizens' right to vote and have a say in who leads the country. South Africa is a democratic, secular state and all people in this beautiful country are protected by the rights and duties enshrined in the Constitution.

Many citizens, living with disabilities, continue to experience a lower standard of life than able-bodied citizens. This is exacerbated for poorer disabled people. The ANC has established a Presidential Working Group dealing with the matters of people living with disabilities. We encourage society to ensure that the broad inclusion of people living with disabilities becomes a national task.

Democracy and the democratic expression of the will of the majority must be protected by all citizens. There should be no spurious attempts to circumvent the legitimate exercise of people's power. Emerging tendencies to engage in low-intensity "law-fare" are attempts to divert the legitimate democratic outcomes. These actions fly in the face of the fundamental and basic principles of democracy. It find expression through various platforms, such as sections of the media, some analysts and commentators as well as continuous court challenges to the exercise of lawful

executive and legislative power. Governing by a majority party that has won an election; is a fundamental basic principle of democracy and is practiced throughout the world.

The ANC also condemns the diversion of legitimate protests which is aimed at causing harm to communities or the police. We re-affirm our support for the rule of law. The ANC supports our police services and we call on communities to work with them. We also call on the police to ensure that, at all times, they operate within the bounds of the law. We unequivocally condemn the killing of policemen and women.

Parliament, the provincial legislatures and local government council chambers are the basic organs where people exercise their decision-making rights. Our participatory democracy enables people to participate in public hearings before public representatives pass the laws. This represents some of the highest expressions of people's power in our democracy.

The attempts to disrupt Parliament are an expression of counter-revolutionary conduct. It seeks to deny South Africans their right to have legislation passed that will create a better life for all. Counter-revolutionaries disrupt Parliament to delay progress in putting in place measures to address unemployment, inequality and poverty. The ANC will not tolerate this desperate and despicable conduct.

The ANC is clear that the constitutional rights of all people to religious, cultural and linguistic freedom must be respected as part of making our democracy work. However, these rights must be exercised in such a manner that they do not infringe on the constitutional rights of other persons in society. The exercise of these rights should further not result in exploitative and harmful practices that undermine the very humanity that our Constitution enjoins us to pursue.

South Africa is very proud of the institutions that support democracy such as the South African Human Rights Commission, the Commission for Gender Equality, the Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities, the Public Protector, the Auditor-General and the Independent Electoral Commission.

These institutions have important roles to play in building this nation and the ANC remains committed to supporting them as they carry out their lawful duties.

We call on our structures and members to be exemplary in giving expression to our representative and participatory democracy and to become active citizens.

A prosperous South Africa

The basic economic policy of the ANC is based on the principles and tenets of the Freedom Charter. We opted for a mixed economy which would harness the role of the state, private sector, cooperatives, small and medium enterprises and the informal sector in shaping the growth of the economy.

The partnership of all these elements and labour are critical for economic growth and to attain the goals of the National Development Plan.

The country requires an activist, interventionist and capable state that takes decisive action to effect radical economic transformation. It is our assertion that the country needs a private sector that acts in the national interest and contributes to the attainment of the national goals of eradicating poverty, unemployment and inequality.

It is imperative that the levels of cooperation between government and business be improved. It is equally important that the levels of cooperation and partnership between labour, government, civil society and the private sector is improved. This requires consistent dialogue that results in positive action.

Going forward, we must enter into a social compact and deepen the partnership of labour, government, civil society and the private sector. In this regard, we call on the NGO sector to play a more meaningful role in shaping and defending progressive policies and to offer their expertise to the ANC when it shapes policies.

We must remember that the world economy is still experiencing low growth following the global economic crisis of 2008. South Africa, like all developing economies, must take steps to deal with such low growth. We identified a two-pronged strategy to chart the way forward: structural reforms to create and maintain a higher growth path and reducing South Africa's vulnerability by stabilising public debt.

It is incumbent on all of us to ensure proper fiscal management and prudent utilization of public money. It is important that we sustain social and economic progress by focusing on the identified developmental priorities.

It is the responsibility of all of us to fight corruption, to expose corrupt people and to report them to the law-enforcement agencies. Silence is complicity and therefore, we must act to eradicate this malaise.

The ANC's 2012 Strategy and Tactics identifies the building of infrastructure, diversifying the industrial base, expanding employment opportunities and developing a national system of innovation as some of the areas that are critical to eradicating poverty and reducing inequality.

We are currently implementing strategies and programmes to mitigate against the worst economic impacts of the minerals price crash and drought. The ANC has long set out to place our economy on a new growth path that will deracialise the economy and make a fundamental break with the ownership patterns of the past. We call on the private sector to play a greater role in this area.

The ANC realises that the current drought has a tremendous impact on the lives of all South Africans and we call on citizens to use water sparingly and to collect rain water for domestic use.

One of the most fundamental historic injustices is the systematic dispossession of our people's land. The challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment have their roots in the vast tracks of land that were stolen from the indigenous people of South Africa. The speed of land reform and levels of support for emerging farmers must be radically accelerated.

The ANC will continue to work with all sectors to find lasting and meaningful ways of effecting redress for the centuries-long injustice of land dispossession.

It is vitally important that, as South Africans, we feed ourselves and therefore, we must be self-sufficient in food production.

The return of land must enable an increase in food productivity. As the Freedom Charter says, the land shall belong to those who work it.

We must harness all our efforts to ensure that farm-workers live and work under humane and decent conditions. We must unite against the killing of workers and farmers.

Infrastructure expansion, economic growth and overall development require specific skills. We need more engineers, more artisans, more qualified teachers and health professionals, to name but a few. We encourage young people to look beyond academic universities for further education.

One of the most integral parts of advancing prosperity is a society in which small businesses and co-operatives flourish. The ANC has put together policies to enable the creation of a conducive environment and support services for small and medium enterprises. The ANC encourages government to ensure that government procurement can benefit such entrepreneurs.

The ANC made a commitment in our 2014 Manifesto that we would ask the government to look into the feasibility of a national minimum wage. The government has made progress and has agreed with all social partners on the introduction of a national minimum wage.

Deliberations are at an advanced stage on the level at which a minimum wage should be set to ensure that it has a meaningful impact on poverty and inequality without undermining employment creation or sustained economic growth.

A crucial element of creating a prosperous society is access to quality education. We are making steady progress in this regard.

South Africa is succeeding with providing quality basic education and we are proud that our efforts are showing significant results. The 2015 Matric results of nearly 500 000 (five hundred thousand) successful matriculants is the highest number ever in our country's history. This is a culmination of years of hard work in that more students sat for the matric examinations than ever before.

Our policies aimed at retention and reducing the drop-out rate are bearing fruits and we continue to show higher numbers of successful students from "no-fee" schools. We are also confident that we are steadily improving the quality of basic education throughout the system and that this year's class of matriculants is better prepared for the rigours of post-school education and life outside the class room.

We have met the demands of the Freedom Charter, "higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit". This means that, as per the dictates of the Constitution, the state will continue to take reasonable measures to make post-school education more accessible and free for children of poor households.

The youth of 2015 have demonstrated that they can be agents of positive social change. This is reminiscent of the militant spirit shown by young people during the 1976 Soweto Students Uprisings and we must harness this enduring activism of young people in eradicating the lingering vestiges of apartheid.

The ANC government appreciates and understands the concerns raised by students. As an immediate measure, we agreed with universities that there would be no fee increase for 2016 and agreed that university students who meet the NSFAS means test will not be required to provide upfront payments when registering for the 2016 academic year. Our government has reprioritised almost R2.6 billion to ensure that deserving students are not barred from continuing their studies because of outstanding university fees. A further two billion rand is allocated for the 2016/17 financial year to ensure that these students, still in the university system, are supported financially to complete their studies.

In total, the ANC government is committing an additional amount of more than R4.5 billion to NSFAS for the 2016/17 financial year.

This is on top of money already allocated to post-school education and these loans will go a long way towards supporting financially needy and academically deserving students.

While it is the right of everyone to protest peacefully, the disruption of university programmes, the destruction of property in some cases and the violent behaviour witnessed was unwarranted, not progressive and not democratic. The ANC and the people of South Africa deplore these acts that undermine the legitimacy of the students' campaign.

The ANC assures the country that we are working hard at finding long-term solutions to the challenges around funding for post-school education.

Government cannot tackle the challenge of the high cost of post school education on its own and we call upon universities and the private sector to continue working with us to find solutions to the problem of escalating fees. We urge students to play their part in ensuring that they focus on their academic studies and take this opportunity provided through these additional loans to successfully complete their studies.

The doors of learning and culture must remain open for all!

Access to quality health services is the cornerstone of any prosperous nation. The ANC continues to move forward with our decision to implement the National Health Insurance (NHI) as a way to provide quality and affordable personal health services to all South Africans. To this end, a White Paper or Policy Statement on NHI has been released by Government for public participation and comment. One of the most important tasks of ANC branches will be to lead and be part of this public participation process.

Our country needs us to work together to achieve economic growth and the eradication of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

Local Government as tool for the NDR and an instrument of development

This year millions of South Africans will exercise their hard won right to elect their local government representatives in our fifth local government elections since 1994. The lives of millions have improved. The services provided by municipalities have reduced poverty and restored dignity to our

people. We acknowledge and celebrate these achievements. South Africa is, indeed, a better place than it was twenty-one years ago.

The ANC believes that our local government representatives must have the trust and confidence of the community where they live and serve.

The ANC remains fully aware of the challenges facing our people and appreciates that people need water, electricity, housing, roads and decent schools near their homes. ANC structures must ensure that our municipalities are responsive to the needs of communities and that they continue to take the lead in addressing poverty, creating employment and reducing inequality.

The ANC is championing the Back to Basics approach, which is based on five pillars:

1. Putting people first;
2. Ensuring delivery of basic services;
3. Good governance;
4. Sound financial management;
5. Building strong institutions.

We call upon all members of our movement, wherever they are deployed, to intensify the Back to Basics programme and ensure that:

- There is political stability and good governance at municipal level.
- There is direct hands-on support for and monitoring of the work of municipalities.
- There is meaningful participation of citizens in municipalities.
- Qualified and experienced officials are appointed in municipalities.
- Bottlenecks in the provision of housing, water and sanitation are removed.
- There is a vigorous and targeted approach to fighting corruption and fraud.

We must work harder and smarter to ensure that citizens' experience of local government will be a happy one. It is the responsibility of every ANC cadre to promote activism in society. ANC cadres should act as the custodians of the principles of fundamental social change; winning respect among their peers and society at large through their exemplary conduct. They must be informed by values of honesty, hard work, humility, service to the people and respect for the laws of the land.

We call upon citizens to strengthen local government by participating actively in participatory structures such as ward committees. We encourage all people of eighteen and above to exercise their democratic right to register and vote in the oncoming local government elections. The ANC says to the youth that the future is in their hands and that they must mobilise and vote for the ANC.

We call upon ANC cadres to mobilise effectively throughout the country to ensure that the ANC secures a decisive victory in the coming local government elections!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS IN YOUR HANDS!!!

PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP

Africa must act in unity for it to play its rightful place on the global stage. This continent can make tremendous strides if it harnesses our collective peoples' power in the areas of economic, social and cultural development.

Africa's economic outlook remains stable. The combined size of Africa's economies is a comparative advantage that we must leverage for the development of the whole continent. African countries are making significant strides in areas such as health, education and other aspects of human development. There is room for improvement and greater cooperation to ensure that our continent develops at a rate that is commensurate to the rest of the world. The ANC will promote regional economic integration and intra-African trade. The signing of the Free Trade Agreement amongst some African economic regions at Sharm El-Sheik in mid-2015 is a reflection of the strides we are making.

One area of strategic cooperation must be to mitigate the worst effects of climate change, as Africa is particularly vulnerable to economic setbacks attributable to changing climatic conditions. We congratulate countries for reaching agreement on climate change during COP21 in France.

The ANC re-affirms our support and commitment to the African Union and, in particular, the advancement of its socio-economic development programme, Agenda 2063.

The ANC treasures our relationship with the Former Liberation Movements and we continue to work together in serving our people. The Former Liberation Movements support one another in exercising our governance responsibilities and we have, therefore, agreed to build a political school.

We are encouraged by the establishment of the BRICS Development Bank, in Shanghai, as indicative of changing relations in the international economic and governance order. The establishment of the regional centre in Johannesburg is on course and will become important in financing development throughout the continent.

The ANC supports struggles for national self-determination and a multilateral approach to the management of global issues. We therefore repeat our calls for the reform of multilateral institutions, such as the UN Security Council, to give greater voice to developing nations and reflect a more just and equitable world order.

The ANC advocates for the self-determination, freedom and independence of Western Sahara and will intensify our solidarity programme with the Polisario Front. The ANC commits to raising the urgency of their struggle for self-determination and freedom in all multilateral institutions. Companies that exploit mineral resources in the occupied part of Western Sahara should be isolated.

We reiterate our solidarity with the people of Palestine and support the isolation of businesses in the UN List that operate in the occupied territories in Palestine. We reiterate that we discourage travel to Israel for ANC leaders, members and representatives for business and leisure purposes. The ANC encourages our government to continue its programme of talking to all parties in the Palestinian territory and calls on the people of Palestine to work together to bring about self-determination.

The ANC is very concerned about the deteriorating situation in the Middle East as this has the potential to trigger a global conflagration. We urge parties to cooperate in line with principles of international law and resolutions of the UN.

We support the call by Cuba for the return of Guantanamo Bay and the lifting of the US economic embargo against Cuba.

TASKS OF THE MOVEMENT

These tasks are a clarion call to all cadres of the ANC, Alliance partners and supporters of our Movement!

- This is the year of advancing peoples' power and the ANC will ensure that our people continue to have a direct say in who leads them. The ANC agreed that our candidates for local government elections must be ANC members in good standing. We remind branches that we select three nominees at an ANC branch meeting and present our nominees at a community meeting. The community is then given an opportunity to interrogate these nominees and to give their views on who must be the candidate. The ANC branch must, unless there are overwhelming and compelling reasons to the contrary, confirm the nominee who holds the majority of community support.
- ANC Branches must lead popular discussions on what makes us South African and, in this manner, branches must continue to be grounded in communities and give hope and leadership to our people.
- Our structures must ensure that these branch level discussions culminate in a national dialogue on the issues that bind this wonderful nation on the one hand and to identify those that divide us and find solutions. Our people must emerge from this dialogue with a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of every South African to build this nation.
- ANC structures need to develop clear campaigns to further entrench our progressive value system among our people. We shall work closely with the Alliance and Mass Democratic Movement in driving these campaigns.
- Our branches must develop a direct campaign to promote non-racialism throughout communities. ANC structures must work with all sectors of society in mainstreaming this campaign.
- There must be ongoing political education throughout the ANC and we direct our branches to have consistent political activities and campaigns. Branches are instructed to hold political education classes, at least, once a month, in order to deepen political understanding and clarity on political matters. The Head Office of the ANC will provide support and political education material to guide ongoing discussions.
- Our Movement is called upon to take greater responsibility for ensuring the fundamental restructuring of the economy. We encourage our members and supporters to work together to create social solidarity among all people for a collective effort to

achieve the national objectives of reducing poverty, creating employment and eliminating inequality.

- We call on our branches to take the lead in public participation processes on the National Health Insurance White Paper and to have a further direct impact on how future health services are shaped and designed.
- ANC members are encouraged to live healthy lifestyles and we discourage the excessive intake of alcohol and the abuse of drugs.
- ANC members must take the lead in using water sparingly.
- We direct our structures and members to become involved in community education initiatives and to contribute to the national discussion and efforts to ensure quality education. Post-school education is a valuable tool for development and ANC members must be actively involved in efforts to support students to complete their studies.
- ANC structures and members must take the lead in making local government to function to create a better life for all. Our people must take an active interest in and participate in ward committees and other structures aimed at strengthening participatory democracy.
- ANC public representatives, at all levels, but especially local councillors, must ensure that they have a dynamic and interactive relationship with their communities. Our people are encouraged to hold public representatives accountable and to demand consistent and constructive feedback from councillors.
- Our people are encouraged to make communities reflect the progressive and positive values of our Movement. Communities must be vibrant, inclusive, and democratic and show respect for the diversity of life in this beautiful country.

The ANC asks our people to work hard to ensure that we gain an overwhelming majority in the coming local government elections through hard work, dedication and service to the people.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The ANC Annual Achievement Awards were initiated to promote a greater focus on the organisational tasks of building branches, strengthening local government and building the leagues. The awards aim to highlight the features of strong branches and coun -cils and to reward best practice within the movement. The awards are named for outstanding cadres of the ANC, whose individual qualities of commitment and selflessness are an example to every ANC mem -ber. During their lives, each of these people made an immeasurable contribution to the struggle for freedom and a better life for all.

The SOL PLAATJE AWARD, conferred on the best performing ANC branch, goes to the Lityelovuyo branch in the North West. The runner-up is the Morning Star branch in the Western Cape.

The ZK MATTHEWS AWARD, conferred on the best performing ANC municipality, goes to the Steve Tshwete municipality in Mpumalanga.

The runner-up is the Sarah Baartman municipality in the Eastern Cape.

The ANC trusts that the rebuilding currently taking place in both the Women's League and the Youth League will place the Leagues in a position to submit entries for the achievement awards from this year onwards.

OBITUARIES

We have lost many cadres during 2015 and express our condolences to the families of all the deceased comrades, including: Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe Ruth Mompoti, Ntate Letsau Nelson Diale, Collins Chabane, Mlungisi Sisulu, Chrizelda Cjiekella, Jackie Selebi, Ma Florrie Daniels, Reggie Vandeyar, Frank Sexwale, General Mayihlome "Skhaphane" Mbatha, Uncle Mshengu Robert Manditha, Ismail (Issy) Dinat, Elizabeth Ramatlhodi, Andile Nkuhlu, Theresa Ramashamole, Thami Mkhwanazi and many others.

The ANC also wants to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of comrade Indres Naidoo, who passed on the 3rd of January 2016.

We dip our revolutionary banner and pick up the spear from where they left in building a truly united, non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous and democratic South Africa.

THE NEC DECLARES 2016:

THE YEAR OF ADVANCING PEOPLES' POWER: LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS IN YOUR HANDS

THE ANC LIVES! THE ANC LEADS! THE ANC WORKS