

The ANC and the Courts

18th September 2017

In the last week, the courts have had to rule on issues relating to the internal democracy of the ANC in the North-West and KZN.

This is not the first time the internal democracy of the ANC has had to be tested in a court and regrettably, as we move towards the elective conference in December all indications are that it is unlikely to be the last.

We should never have had to be placed in this situation, and it is incredulous that the largest political party in South Africa should appear to be in such a state of disarray that members have to face each other in the courts. It is a sad reflection on our organisation when an overwhelming majority of members and supporters feel their trust has been undermined, and increasingly beginning to even question the credibility, let alone the legitimacy, of those in leadership,

Some would want to argue judicial overreach, and that it is only a minority of members who want to abuse our judicial system, they are wrong.

In KZN, this was not (as some would argue) simply a case of disaffected members in KZN who lost an election, running to the courts. The manipulation of electoral processes is sadly becoming endemic in many parts of the Country.

On paper, the ANC has a wide range of checks and balances that are far superior to that of other South African political parties. Yet so much evidence is coming to the fore showing that the abuse is there; increasingly bringing our party into disrepute and creating disillusionment among the membership and supporters.

No matter how much some may want to argue to the contrary, the ANC is no longer an underground liberation movement fighting to create a constitutional democracy. We attained that in 1994!

To hide behind “democratic centralism” arguing that internal dissatisfactions should not vented in the public domain is disingenuous. It is tantamount to prescribing secretive underground behaviour among members ignoring the fact that our democratic constitution has completely changed the paradigm for political engagement in our country.

However, there are those who wish us to remain in a time warp that is internally ill equipped to become a modernising political party. As stalwarts, we believe that if the challenges are honestly confronted the ANC can once again be embraced by the majority of our citizens. And become the natural choice for our youth who wish to become active participants in creating a democratic inclusive, non-racist, non-sexist, vibrant society, striving to overcome inequality and poverty.

It is strongly believed that there is a close link between the manipulation of ANC elections and those who have been involved in corrupt activities. This is part of the insidious process of state capture and must be exposed.

The overwhelming majority of members of the ANC at all levels of our organisation are honest and committed to the development of our country. They must be at the forefront of actively condemning all illegal activities, and ensuring there is open and transparent action against those who have brought the party into disrepute.

Now is the time for the ANC to publicly critically review its internal democracy so there is no room for the manipulation of the election of leadership. There has been so much erosion of trust that we cannot see any better alternative.

As stalwarts, we have consistently argued that the ANC and the alliance must participate in a National Consultative Conference which can openly and honestly confront the crisis that our country and the ANC face.

The National Consultative Conference will potentially be an important part of helping to restore the legitimacy of the ANC which was clearly seen in the support of our citizens in the struggle against apartheid; the introduction of our constitutional democracy and the first democratic elections. It will also show that the overwhelming majority of past and present members of the ANC remain committed to the values, practices and the highest ethical standards which were recognised internationally as such and characterised our development as a political party.