

Press release

Dated: Sunday 31st December 2017

Subject: The ANC and our New Year's Resolutions

RECLAIMING OUR HISTORY, FOR THE SAKE OF OUR FUTURE

Dear Member of the Media

Introduction

This press release has been prepared by the ANC stalwarts and veterans (the stalwarts) who are signatories to the document "For the Sake of our Future" <https://sakeofourfuture.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Sake-of-Our-Future-Founding-Document.pdf> in October 2016. The signatories also facilitated the recent National Consultative Conference on the ANC in November 2017. The declaration of that conference can be found at <https://sakeofourfuture.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Declaration-of-the-NCC-on-the-ANC-2017-1.pdf> .

The ANC and our New Year's Resolutions

As stalwarts of the movement we would like to congratulate Cde Ramaphosa as our new president and wish him well in the challenging task of leading the ANC.

We hope it will be a breath of fresh air that we as a nation will gladly breathe. It will not be an easy road, given the present challenges our movement faces. Real party unity can only be built on our historic principles, values and integrity as expounded and practiced by Comrade OR Tambo.

For those who use the Gregorian calendar the new year is normally a time for reflection and resolutions. We would like to share our own thoughts on some of the resolutions we will work towards in 2018. We hope ANC branches and the incoming leadership of the ANC will also embrace them:

1. There has been much talk about unity in 2017. This needs to be turned into a principled reality in 2018. It will be a difficult path, previously avoided, of honest painful reflection of all that is wrong with the movement. The January 8th Statement of the incoming NEC should be an ideal starting point to show a commitment towards breaking with the unacceptable practices of the past which has seen a progressive rejection at the ballot box. It cannot be that difficult to see what our country sees is wrong with our movement.
2. The ANC membership and those in elected leadership must be informed that the days of unacceptable behaviour are over. The President of our country, needs to give the new leadership of the ANC the opportunity to prepare for the 2019 elections. The perception of corruption and criminality in the Presidency will not, and should not be wished away. A starting point and a clear message to the country, would be for our country's President to

voluntarily step down in the interests of country and the African National Congress. If the President really loves the ANC and wants it to remain in power after 2019, he would assist it by handing over the leadership of the country to the newly elected President of the ANC to better prepare for the 2019 elections. If he wishes the newly elected leadership well into the future he will save it from even contemplating recalling him.

3. We believe there remains unfinished business for the stalwarts from 2017, the year of Comrade OR Tambo. We will continue to demand that there is a radical departure from the unacceptable tolerance of corruption that has reached into all parts of our economy. There can be no place in the ANC, government, the civil service, and the public and private sectors of the economy, for those who have been involved in corrupt activities, irrespective of their position. Justice must be seen to take its course, objectively without fear or favour. In 2018 no one should ever again believe that they can avoid their day in court because of their position in society. Real action against corruption has to happen, with the urgent appointment of a new head of the National Prosecuting Authority and the depoliticisation of our law enforcement agencies.
4. As stalwarts, collectively, we did not give support to any candidates at the elective conference. We do not believe that is our role, we are not and will not be part of any faction or slate. However, we urged delegates to the elective conference to carefully test candidates against the “eye of the needle” and not to elect comrades who were tainted by corruption. It is hoped the error of some selections will be corrected by our justice system. Every honest member of society and the ANC must want to see those who have stolen money have their day in court.
5. Continue to encourage comrades who are eligible to join the Veterans’ League to become active members of this League. The Veterans League, with its wealth of experience must become the conscience of the movement. However, we are mindful that the criteria for membership, 60 years of age or older and 40 years’ unbroken service to the movement, means that the class of ’76 scrapes in by length of service, but they and many other comrades from that period, may not yet make the cut in terms of age. We urge all principled comrades and those who have felt it difficult to participate in recent years, to be part of the transformation of the movement and assist in rebuilding our branches, so they become more relevant in their work in the communities they serve.
6. Encourage younger comrades, especially women to join the other two leagues, the ANCWL and the ANCYL, so they can again become representative of the demographics of the country and focus on ensuring the policies and practices of the ANC address the challenges of women and youth in our country. There is a need for both to carefully reflect on their own recent role and to begin to understand why these two leagues presently do not attract the future leaders of our country, who our citizens can identify with and respect. The recent elective conference was not only a sad articulation on divisions, slates, factions and deals, but an indictment of the present state of

both these Leagues; the failure to elect women and youth into our new leadership and an expression of the continued patriarchy within our movement and wider society.

7. That all legitimate ex-members of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) are unified in one organisation, and we never again see youngsters in uniform on the streets of our country, playing at being soldiers. This is an insult to our fallen comrades and others who made sacrifices as members of MK.
8. The unacceptable period of opportunist, populist racial comments against minority groups is closed for ever. The ANC again returns to being a unifier, committed to creating a non-racial, non-sexist society, that has no place for tribalism and ethnic interests over those of our country. We must urgently restore and promote respect for the rich diversity of our people.
9. The ANC re-commits to education for liberation and actively encourages all members to achieve qualifications in their chosen fields. Your nation cries out for qualified committed leaders.
10. There is a degree of irony that it is the stalwarts of the ANC who stand up and say the ANC must be dragged kicking into the 21st Century. Stalwarts are those who knew and worked with OR Tambo; were part of those who led the struggle against apartheid, spent their time at the “schools” on Robben Island and other prisons throughout the country; were the class of '76; in the leadership, or loyal soldiers of Umkhonto we Sizwe; part of the internal underground; leaders and members of the UDF; members of the Alliance and progressive organisations. During the fight against apartheid we worked in secrecy to avoid arrest, imprisonment, torture or death. That secrecy is no longer necessary and we must now create an open democratic party, fit for purpose. Today, secrecy only feeds unacceptable behaviours, factions, slates and deals that have no place in a democratic party of the future.

END

Background

The late Comrade Kathrada was the first signatory of the document “For the Sake of our Future” and we remain honoured by the continued presence and support of Comrades Denis Goldberg and Andrew Mlangeni.

As stalwarts, we have been and remain loyal members of the ANC for many decades. Our objective is to continue to serve all the people of South Africa and ensure the historical values and principles of the ANC are restored. As stalwarts, we feel a profound responsibility to the movement and the country, to ensure that the principles and values of the ANC are not destroyed.

We believe that the overwhelming majority of our citizens embrace the values of the Freedom Charter and the Constitution of our country.

We would like to believe that we speak on behalf of all members of the ANC who reject state capture and any form of corruption; want to see the realization of our potential as a nation and who are committed to the elimination of poverty and the unacceptably high levels of inequality.

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