



ANC TODAY

ONLINE VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS



ELECTIONS 2009

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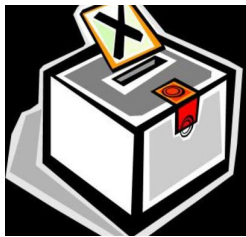


GET INVOLVED IN THE EFFORT TO BUILD A BETTER LIFE

The ANC launches its 2009 Election Manifesto on Saturday, 10 January at the ABSA Stadium in East London. From Saturday midday, you will be able to get involved in the effort to build a better life for all via the internet - from your PC or mobile phone. You will be able to watch and download videos and get information on how the ANC, working together with you can do more in improving the lives of ordinary South Africans.

ELECTIONS

Policies that change people's life



In a few months' time South Africa will hold its fourth democratic elections for national and provincial government. This election is fundamentally about the policies and programmes that will meaningfully improve the lives of the people.

Fifteen years into democracy, together we have achieved much in building a new society - uniting all our people and expanding opportunities that freedom has brought,

including reducing poverty and improving the quality of life of millions of South Africans.

The economic and social devastation of apartheid has not completely disappeared. Our common struggle to build a better South Africa has not come to an end.

For 97 years the ANC has led a relentless struggle to bring about a South Africa that truly belongs to all its people, black and white. The ANC has always stood for basic democratic principles that include:

- A constitution that guarantees human rights for all, the right to a minimum standard of life, including the right to access health, education, food, and water;
- The right of all people to elect a government of their choice in regular, free and fair elections in a multi-party democracy;
- Mobilisation of our people to actively take part in decision-making processes that affect their lives;
- An independent judiciary;
- Freedom from discrimination on racial, gender or any other ground;
- Freedom of association and expression.

RECENT NEWS

Fond farewell to a loyal servant of the people | Struggle stalwart Cleopas Madoda Nsibandé, an active ANC member for more than 60 years, a founder member of the SA Congress of Trade Unions), and one of the key campaigners leading to the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955, was laid to rest on 3 January after passing away at the age of 80.

Humanity lost a great sister | South Africa mourned the death of Helen Suzman on 1 January, an outspoken MP who waged a tireless battle against apartheid repression and injustice and earned the respect of the masses of the people of this country.

SABC outlines election plans | The SABC announced its plans for the 2009 elections, which includes the appointment of a complaints officer to consider any political party grievance and an external media monitoring company in an effort to ensure its coverage is fair and equitable.

Proteas beat Australia on their home soil | South Africa's cricket team clinched an historic test match series against Australia on their home turf despite losing the third and final test this week. The Proteas won the series 2-1.

The 2009 elections will be about policies that change people's lives. Continuing to listen, consult widely, and involving all people of South Africa the ANC followed this tradition in putting together the election manifesto, through an extensive consultative process involving the public, the mass democratic movement, the Alliance and key sectors of our society.

The ANC can thus proudly say that its manifesto has been drawn up together with the people of South Africa. We have identified five priority areas for the next five years:

- Creation of decent work and sustainable livelihoods,
- Education,
- Health,
- Fight against crime and corruption,
- Rural development, food security and land reform.

Our priorities specifically target the needs of the youth, women and people with disabilities. Learning from the lessons of the past 15 years, we will be able to speed up change and bring the benefits of freedom to all our people.

We have achieved much in the last 15 years, and we are committed to do more guided and inspired by the vision of our people, the Freedom Charter.

Since 1994, working together with the people, successive ANC governments have:

- Overseen the longest economic expansion recorded in SA history. From 1994 to 2003 the economy grew at an average of 3%, and 4.5% since 2004.
- Worked to reduce unemployment, which dropped from 31% in 2003 to 23% in 2007. This translates into 500,000 new jobs being created annually since 2004.
- Expanded Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) coverage to include nearly a million domestic workers and farm workers;
- Massively increased access to social grants from three million people in 1997 to 12.5 million in 2008;
- Built subsidised housing for around 10 million people, outpacing informal housing for the first time;
- Achieved access to clean water for about 18.7 million people and provided 10.9 million with sanitation;.
- Expanded the provision of electricity to reach 70% of the population.

Progress has been recorded through expansion of free primary health care. We have expanded health infrastructure, including building 1,600 clinics and eight new hospitals. Many public hospitals have been revitalised and refurbished. We have scaled-up the antiretroviral rollout programme with more than 480,000 people enrolled.

Access to our primary and secondary schooling has reached near universal enrolment, with the participation of girls being among the highest in the world. The matriculation pass rate increased from 58% in 1994 to 65% in 2007. Pupil-to-teacher ratios have improved from 43:1 in 1996 to 32:1 in 2006.

The impact of these economic and social policies has seen significant reductions in the level of severe poverty and improvement in the quality of life of millions of South Africans. Significant progress has been made toward the vision of creating a united, non-racial and non-sexist society.

This election is about building on these achievements, by putting in place the right policies and programmes to speed up change over the next five years.

The ANC will remain in touch with our people and listen to their needs. We have achieved much in the last 15 years, but we are committed to do more.

LATEST STATEMENTS

'Political authority doesn't rest with individuals'- Mantashe, 8 January 2009

<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docs/pr/2009/pr0108a.html>

Mandela sends message of support on ANC's anniversary, 8 January 2009

<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docs/ancdocs/pr/2009/pr0108.html>

Intensive preparations for ANC manifesto launch, 7 January 2009

<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docs/ancdocs/pr/2009/pr0107.html>

World should condemn Israel's attacks on Gaza, 6 January 2009

<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docs/ancdocs/pr/2009/pr0106a.html>

LATEST SPEECHES

Christmas and New Year Message by President, Jacob Zuma, 23 December 2008

<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docs/history/zuma/2008/jz1223.html>

New Year message to the Nation by President Kgalema Motlanthe, 31 December 2008

<http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/show.asp?type=sp&include=president/sr/2008/sp1231186.htm&ID=1856>

Oration by President Kgalema Motlanthe at the funeral of Cleopas Nsibandé, 3 January 2009

<http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/show.asp?type=sp&include=president/sr/2009/sp01031341.htm&ID=18578>

GAZA CRISIS

Work for lasting peace in the Middle East



The world needs to stand united in its opposition to the Israeli attacks on Gaza, and to work together with the Israeli and Palestinian people to find a just and lasting solution to the problems that have plagued the region for decades.

History has shown that the military option does not offer a lasting solution. Rather, it has deepened the crisis, hardened attitudes, and led to widespread suffering and destruction.

The ANC is unambiguous in condemning the horrendous attacks that have been taking place in Gaza. The Israeli government needs to accept the positions taken by the United Nations (UN), most notably the UN Human Rights Commission Resolution of June 1996.

As long as Israel continues to occupy land rightfully belonging to the Palestinian people there will not be a lasting solution to the problems and conflict in the Middle East. The Palestinian people have a right to exist within a sovereign state with secure borders alongside a sovereign Israeli state.

The ANC this week joined calls from around the world for an immediate end to the ongoing Israeli bombing and ground attacks of civilians in Gaza, which has led to the death of hundreds of civilians and injury to thousands more. This must be accompanied by a cessation of rocket attacks from Gaza on Israeli civilians.

Collective punishment is not going to resolve the enmity between Palestine and Israel; what will move the peace process forward is addressing the root cause of the conflict.

Israel is in violation of international laws governing retaliatory engagements and is creating a deep humanitarian crisis.

The ANC this week called on the leaders of the international community to do more than condemn the ongoing hostility against the people of Palestine and to demand that Israel withdraw from all occupied territories in Palestine and end the siege of Gaza.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, 10 January 2009

The ANC celebrates its anniversary and launches its 2009 election manifesto at Absa Stadium, East London, 09h00.