



# ANC TODAY

ONLINE VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Our nation is in good state



The President of the Republic, Kgalema Motlanthe, reminded us during the State of the Nation address on 6 February that our democracy is solid and that our nation is in a good state. There is a tendency to forget to celebrate the wonderful achievements of the last 15 years.

Adding to the progressive nature of the State of the Nation address, the Budget Speech by the Finance Minister, Trevor Manuel, provided much-needed relief to the poor and vulnerable. All in all, our government and our country are in good shape. We however remain mindful of the global economic recession and the impact it is going to

have on our people and our country.

President Motlanthe also announced the election date, 22 April, during the response to the State of the Nation address. The announcement has added much-needed oomph to the election campaign, notwithstanding the concerns about the logistics of extending the vote to South Africans living in other countries.

There is a tendency to view all South African expatriates as disgruntled people who left the country because they hated the dawn of freedom and democracy. That small element may exist, but not all emigrants are out of the country for such reasons. We hope that those compatriots who may have left because they could not accept the demise of apartheid will in time overcome their prejudice. They will eventually realise that South Africa belongs to all of us, and that there is no place like home.

Scores of other South Africans are abroad in search of greener pastures, for example nurses, social workers and teachers. There are also young professionals working in sectors that are in demand worldwide, such as information and communications technology. We know that they all remain very loyal to the country and view the opportunities that have come their way as being part of the fruits of liberation and democracy.

We have no intention of restricting the freedom of movement of South Africans, but obviously do not want to encourage the skills flight either. Therefore, we must do more to improve the remuneration and working conditions of public servants, so that they can resist the lure of foreign countries. Our economy should create opportunities for the absorption of skilled young professionals. The ANC election manifesto takes care of these imperatives.

Still on the subject of elections, much has been made of the fracas in Nongoma on the 1 February when Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) supporters attacked our people going to the ANC rally in Kwa-Seme village. It was an open act of aggression in broad daylight. To the credit of IFP President Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi he immediately condemned the incident. Our view is that the IFP leadership was caught unawares by the violence. We hold Shenge in very high esteem. We do not doubt his commitment to peace and stability in KwaZulu Natal and the whole country. We are committed to working with him and the IFP to consolidate the gains of our democracy.

## WEEK IN REVIEW

**South Africa votes on 22 April |** South African President Kgalema Motlanthe proclaims 22 April 2009 as a day for country's fourth democratic elections for parliament and the nine provincial legislatures.

**Budget focuses on needs of the poor |** Economists, politicians, journalists, members of the farming community and ordinary citizens across the country welcome the budget presented by Finance Minister Trevor Manuel. The budget, which has been tabled during turbulent economic conditions, places particular emphasis on the needs of the poor.

**South Africans abroad to vote |** The Pretoria High Court rules that registered voters living abroad should be allowed to vote. The ruling is subject to confirmation by the Constitutional Court.

It is important for us both to speak strongly to our youth wings to ensure that they fully understand where we come from, and why we do not want to go back there. The ANC and IFP worked tirelessly together to ensure that peace and stability reign in that province.

I do not think that the people of KwaZulu Natal or any political party would want to take the country back to the horror of violence and pain. That era should be buried forever as part of our unfortunate history.

The healthy contestation for votes should continue unhindered in all parts of our country. I received a letter from the Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission, Brigalia Bam, who wants to deliver an election that is as peaceful as all previous ones, and wants the cooperation of all parties.

We urge our members and structures, particularly the ANC Youth League, to campaign in a dignified and peaceful manner. The youth campaign must be underpinned by respect for elders and for the next person, regardless of their station in life. Respect for one another and the promotion of human dignity are the cornerstones of our value system as a nation. We shall not compromise on that.

Parliament rises this week, and some Members of Parliament from all parties will be leaving to pursue other interests after years of service to the nation. We congratulate them on a job well done and wish them well.

We also bid farewell to the former Leader of the Opposition, Tony Leon. We acknowledge his contribution to the strengthening of our democracy. He may have crossed swords with the ruling party on many occasions, but that is the life of politics and the spirit of democracy. It is never personal. We hope he will continue to contribute to the life of this nation and to his country.

As the campaign intensifies in the coming weeks, we want to reach every corner of the country to tell South Africans: "We have achieved much in the last 15 years, but we are committed to do more. Working together we can do more! A vote for the ANC is a vote for a better life for all".

The message must be heard through the length and breadth of our country until 22 April, when the people of our country will once again give the ANC a new mandate to govern.

We will then ensure that our nation remains in a good state.

Jacob G. Zuma

## DEBATING EDUCATION

# Improving standards in schools, colleges and universities.



Professor Jonathan Jansen from the University of Pretoria has challenged all parties to answer the following questions on education (The Times, "Vital questions for education", 29 January 2009). The ANC responds:

1. What will your party do if an MEC for education in one of the provinces shows blatant disregard for a scheduled meeting of the minister of education to discuss the opening of the school year, and trots off to attend the court proceedings for the president of her

political party?

## EVENTS IN HISTORY

**16 February 1948:** Dr Yusuf Dadoo and Dr Monty Naicker are sentenced to six months hard labour for 'wrongfully and unlawfully aiding or abetting certain Asiatic persons in entering the province of Transvaal from Natal'.

**15 February 1964:** The International Labour Organisation (ILO) suspends South Africa from participation in its Annual General Conferences in Geneva objecting to South Africa's policy of racial discrimination.

**13 February 1982:** Fifteen thousand people attend the funeral of Neil Aggett, a union organiser, the fifty-first person to die in police detention, and the first white person to die under those circumstances since 1963.

**14 February 1984:** The Mogopa community is forcibly removed, as about 300 homes and a cluster of community buildings are bulldozed. In 1987 the Supreme Court rules that the removal of the Mogopa people was illegal.



To find out if you are registered to vote, SMS your ID number to 32810, visit the IEC website at [www.elections.org.za](http://www.elections.org.za) or call 0800 11 8000 toll free from a landline.

If an MEC doesn't send in an apology and constantly absents themselves from meetings, the ANC would certainly take action. We would be even more concerned if the meetings were cancelled due to low attendance or lack of preparation. Such a situation has not yet arisen in the 14 year of our democracy. I think we should all agree that the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) has functioned well and will continue to do so.

2. Given the acknowledged failure to deliver in the provinces on noble policies at the national level, would you appoint people to critical positions on the basis of their loyalty to the party, or on the basis of their competence?

The ANC believes that appointments should be based on competence and proven ability to execute. This is why we have paid increased attention to teacher development, the review of district offices and their effectiveness, and evaluation (with deans of education faculties) of initial teacher education in our universities. Further, the ANC has supported plans to upgrade teacher qualifications through the provision of bursaries.

The ANC has also agreed to the establishment of a National Evaluation and Education Development Unit to review and audit education provision and quality on a regular basis. Such a unit will also have a remit to focus on skills and competence in schools, districts and provincial departments.

3. What would you do if the largest teachers' union, an ally of Cosatu (which itself is a member of the alliance), decides, like they did before, to close down and disrupt schools for weeks or months in the interest of their teachers - but to the devastation of pupils and learning in our poorest schools?

Relations with unions have tended to be adversarial, but the ANC believes that increased cooperation and collaboration between teacher unions and political leaders will lead to improved attention to professional issues. We call for more professionalism. The non-negotiables outlined by our party in its manifesto - on time, in class, teaching - establish the framework within which we plan to pursue our links with teacher unions. We may need to ask parliament to review whether the usual form of public sector wage negotiations is appropriate for a profession that is so critical for the future of our youth and nation.

4. Given the evidence that poor leadership is to blame in many of the country's most dysfunctional schools, would you fire serially ineffective principals despite their loyalties to the dominant party?

The ANC supports the removal of principals, whoever they support, from schools that are serially ineffective. However, we believe we should retrain and mentor. Some steps in this regard have already been taken - the leadership training programme for principals and the creation of an Education Management Service division in education (with signed performance agreements). The Education Laws Amendment Act (2007) provided for curator teams to be established to support failing schools.

The primary concern must be to increase effectiveness and quality learning outcomes. Several provinces have moved in this regard and the results speak for themselves. Thus, we do believe decisive action against failing leadership is necessary.

5. Given the additional evidence of schools in each province that repeatedly fail masses of learners, are you prepared to appoint an administrator to take over seriously malfunctioning schools - just as the legislation permits malfunctioning universities to be taken over by government?

Yes, but the ANC supports an administrative task team composed of individuals with different skills.

6. Given further evidence that in many of the under-performing schools, the problem is the teachers' knowledge of the subject matter, would you act against the protectionist instincts of the teachers' unions and test every teacher to see whether they know enough to teach our children?

The ANC does not believe that teacher testing is necessary. However, more must be done to improve their knowledge and implementation of the curriculum. The ANC is committed to improvements in this aspect of teacher development. It is our intention to work closely with all teacher unions, effective and professional NGOs, universities and other interested institutions to mount a vigorous content and curriculum development training programme.

## LATEST STATEMENTS

ANC statement on voting abroad ruling, 10 February 2009  
<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docs/pr/2009/pr0210.html>

ANC statement on the announcement of the date for the 2009 elections, 10 February 2009  
<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docancdocs/pr/2009/pr0210a.html>

ANC welcomes Tsvangirai inauguration as Prime Minister, 11 January 2009  
<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docancdocs/pr/2009/pr0211.html>

ANC concerned about comments that denigrate any person, 12 February 2009  
<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docancdocs/pr/2009/pr0212.html>

## LATEST SPEECHES

State of the Nation Address, President Kgalema Motlanthe, 6 February 2009  
<http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?docs/history/motlanthe/2009/km0206.htm>

Reply to State of the Nation Debate, President Kgalema Motlanthe, 10 February 2009  
<http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/show.php?type=sp&include=president/sp/2009/s15.htm&ID=1879>

Budget speech of Finance Minister Trevor Manuel, 11 February 2009  
<http://www.treasury.gov.za/document/nal%20budget/2009/speech/speech.htm>

7. Given the increasing demand for higher education in the country, would you "uncap" the limits imposed on university enrolments by the education department so that all young people who qualify can enjoy access to advanced training?

The ANC plans to increase university capacity, but believes enrolment planning is necessary for purposes of quality and efficiency. In 2007 we completed a collaborative enrolment planning process with all universities that sets out the future growth of the sector. In the planning process we found that the sector did not have much capacity for the growth we wish to see by 2015. We have agreed to initiate a process to determine future expansion of existing institutions and the creation of new capacity.

8. Given that the children of the middle classes start with a huge advantage in grade 1 because they attended excellent preschools, will you make and fund a compulsory, quality preschool for all children?

The ANC has provided for a massive expansion in Early Childhood Development (ECD) provision. Over 70% of our public primary schools now have a grade R class. We plan to expand provision through our participation in phase two of the Expanded Public Works programme ECD initiative. Through this programme we work with community providers to identify and upgrade ECD sites, train providers, register them as ECD sites and ensure they receive subsidies from the Social Development department and health services. The ANC is committed to the expansion of early learning opportunities.

9. Given the fact that the 2008 Mathematical Literacy paper contained a majority of questions common to much lower school grades, are you prepared to admit that the standard of education in the country is appallingly low?

The ANC doesn't admit that the 2008 mathematical literacy matric paper is a proxy for low education standards. While the ANC is committed to improving standards in schools, colleges and universities, our view is that education has improved for the majority of young South Africans.

10. Given the fact that the most competent teachers in the deep rural areas are often from India and Zimbabwe, are you prepared to permit a massive inflow of foreign teachers to help - in the short term - particularly with mathematics and science teaching in our poorest schools?

Yes. Government has recruited teachers from abroad, we have an agency appointed to assist with this process, and have now had many teachers from outside South Africa appointed in scarce skills posts. The approach is a temporary measure to assist us in our retraining and development of local teachers. Limpopo is leading the way in this regard and should be commended for their efforts.

11. Given the obvious incapacity of the Eastern Cape province to offer even a modicum of quality education to the majority living in that province - despite the rapid turnovers in the heads of department and MECs - is your party prepared to petition the national government to take over education in that province in the interest of the pupils?

The ANC believes that the national department must play a greater role in supporting and overseeing improved provision of education in the Eastern Cape.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **MASS MEETING - LEJWELEPUTSWA**

to be addressed by ANC  
Deputy President Kgalema  
Motlanthe  
SATURDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2009  
Thabong Indoor Sport Centre, ,  
16h00 - 17h30

### **MEETING WITH MINORITIES - WELKOM**

to be addressed by ANC  
Deputy President Kgalema  
Motlanthe  
SATURDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2009  
Kingdom Ministry, Welkom, 18H30 -  
19h30

### **EASTERN CAPE ANC RALLY**

to be addressed by ANC President  
Jacob Zuma  
SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2009  
Idutywa Sports Ground, Idutywa,  
Eastern Cape,  
10h00

### **MAOKENG DAY RALLY**

to be addressed by ANC  
Deputy President Kgalema  
Motlanthe  
SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2009  
Seisoville Stadium,  
12H00 - 13h00

### **LUNCH WITH FARM WORKERS**

to be addressed by ANC  
Deputy President Kgalema  
Motlanthe  
SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2009  
Rautenbasch Hall, Kroonstad Town,  
13H30 - 14h30