



# CONFERENCE UPDATE/2

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 INFORMATION ON THE ANC 51<sup>ST</sup> NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 16-20 DECEMBER 2002

## Policy Conference resolutions highlight poverty and unemployment

This National Policy Conference of the ANC, held over the four days of September 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> was attended by 687 delegates from ANC national, provincial, regional and branch level structures, from the ANC Youth and Women's Leagues, COSATU, the SACP, SANCO, COSAS and SASCO. It has been marked by extremely high levels of active participation, discussion and debate. This Conference was preceded by a comprehensive process, and it serves, in turn, as a major step towards our 5<sup>1st</sup> National Congress to be held in December in Stellenbosch.

Our policy process has proceeded in the democratic traditions of the African National Congress and included the following elements:

Preparations for this Policy Conference began last year with requests for submissions from all structures of the ANC, from government departments, and parliamentary study groups.

Ninety-seven regional and sub-regional policy workshops were held throughout the country. These involved the active participation of our Alliance partners (SACP, COSATU and SANCO) as well as other organs of progressive civil society.

Provincial policy conferences were held in all provinces, bringing together over 8,000 delegates from ANC and other progressive structures. The Policy Department of the ANC received more than 400 separate submissions from branches and regions.

Our discussion documents were also made available to the general public, through the publication of *Umrabulo Special Edition* (#16).

*Closing Statement of the National Policy Conference,  
delivered by Deputy President Jacob Zuma,  
30 September 2002*

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As a people's organisation we invited, and indeed received, many comments and contributions from a diverse range of individuals and organisations.

Therefore, delegates to this Policy Conference came enriched by an extensive participatory process involving thousands of our people. The robust debates that have taken place over the last four days were an indication of how seriously the participants took the President's invitation, in his opening address, to engage with policy challenges facing our movement and our country.

### **Policy challenges**

In reviewing our Strategy and Tactics as adopted at our 50<sup>th</sup> National Congress in 1997, and in assessing key ANC and government policies, this Policy Conference has re-affirmed the general thrust of our policies and perspectives. Furthermore, the Policy Conference has identified many new challenges as well as the need to intensify implementation of existing policies.

We are well aware that democratic policy development and evaluation is an ongoing task. This is especially so in the case of the ANC: we are a ruling party, a mass-based movement, the leading formation in a dynamic Alliance and at the head of all progressive forces for change, for transformation and for nation-building.

Comrades, the transformation process has never been easy, particularly if the change takes place within a revolutionary context. In our case we must recognize the fact that we are in a period of a changing global situation.

It is within this understanding that the task facing the ANC should be understood. This task is to develop policies that are able to address the problems faced by our people at a variety of levels: from the local tasks of a ward councilor to the challenge of providing leadership in a globalising world. Our responsibilities include, therefore, developing policy and providing leadership locally, provincially, nationally, in the SADC region, in the African continent, amongst developing countries, and amongst the nations of our planet.

Since we met in our 1997 Congress in Mafikeng, the international balance of forces has been radically transformed by the postures adopted by the countries of the West. There has been a re-emergence of conservative forces that embrace unilateralism, growing protectionism, big power politics as well as other policies with the capacity to destabilize the world. Also of concern have been the acts of terrorism, which also contribute to destabilisation. These developments have led to growing tension amongst the peoples of the world.

Nevertheless, we have been able to navigate these troubled international waters and have placed the issues of poverty eradication and a fairer world order firmly on the international agenda. In particular we hosted and contributed to the success of the Non-Aligned Movement Summit, The World Conference Against Racism, the launch of the African Union and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

On the domestic front, this Policy Conference has affirmed two fundamental challenges:

What is needed is a determined effort to ensure that our policies are implemented effectively and with more strategic co-ordination. Our Policy Conference devoted considerable attention to examining reasons for successes and shortcomings in this regard.

Above all, the commissions and plenary sessions of this Conference have underlined the overriding challenge of tackling poverty and unemployment in our society. Indeed, tackling poverty and unemployment is the consistent thread that runs through the great majority of draft resolutions that we will be taking from this Conference to our National Congress in December.

### **Some key proposals**

It is impossible to do justice in this brief overview to the diversity, detail and richness of the discussions and draft resolutions emerging from this Conference. The full text of our draft resolutions for the 51<sup>st</sup> Congress will be distributed throughout our structures and allied

formations, and also made available to the general public, in the coming days.

However, to provide some idea of resolutions coming from our nine commissions and our plenary sessions, we highlight the following, among others:

### **Social Transformation**

This Policy Conference has adopted an important draft resolution calling on government to continue, with a sense of great urgency, with plans towards a comprehensive social security system. This should include the consolidation of all existing social measures such as the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) and all social grants. The strengthening and progressive expansion of the social wage, including removing obstacles to the delivery of free basic services to all in the shortest possible time, was also identified as a priority.

Conference also resolved to expand the reach of existing programmes, such as the child support grant and the school nutrition programme. Specifically, we are proposing that the age eligibility for the child support grant be raised, and that the school nutrition programme be extended beyond children in grade R, as well as to secondary schools where possible.

In regard to health care, the Policy Conference is proposing the strengthening of the distribution of drugs so that they reach all our people. We are calling for access to affordable medicines for all, including through the speeding up of the implementation of Act 90 of 1997, on generic substitution and parallel importation.

We are calling for the strengthening and acceleration of the implementation of our national AIDS strategy, as amplified in the cabinet statement of 17 April 2002. The ANC must continue to be at the forefront of community mobilisation and leadership around HIV/AIDS, especially with regard to awareness, prevention, voluntary testing and counseling, treatment and care.

### **Economic transformation**

Conference noted the progress that has been made in restructuring the South African economy, expanding its manufacturing base, diversifying our exports, skills development and black economic empowerment.

However, conference noted the high unemployment rate in our country, underpinning continued poverty and many other social problems. We are calling on our government at all levels to embark on programmes that combine short-term measures for immediate relief with longer term interventions for sustainable job creation, skills training and alternative income generating opportunities. We are also supporting a major extension

of community based public works programmes using labour intensive methods.

In regard to state-owned assets, this Policy Conference reaffirmed ANC policy on restructuring of state owned assets in a manner that enhances the developmental capacity of our state. To this end, the mandates of state owned assets and enterprises must continue to be aligned with the social and economic mandates of our developmental agenda. Furthermore conference affirmed the importance of the National Framework Agreement, and proposes that it be extended to apply to all spheres of government. Conference also identified the need to give priority to job retention, job creation and social plans in the process of restructuring.

Conference took note of the recent escalation of the price of basic foodstuffs and proposes that urgent and sustainable measures be introduced to mitigate the impact of these on the poor.

In regard to inflation, we note that monetary policy must be used in a flexible manner, consistent with the broad aims and objectives of ANC policy. Our draft resolution calls for maintaining our approach on inflation targeting, while ensuring that such targets are consistent with our overall economic objectives.

On agriculture and food security, we note the work that has already been done to reverse the legacy of centuries of dispossession. In order to take this work forward we proposed a resolution to engage with other formations and lead a popular campaign for rural development, including the formation and development of cooperatives, farmers and rural enterprises' associations. In this regard, it is not correct to raise the problem of landlessness as if nothing is being done.

### **Infrastructure development**

This Policy Conference has noted that greater levels of funding are now available to significantly enhance infrastructural development. Our draft resolution proposes that the ANC should endorse the principle that infrastructure development is the primary driver of growth and development. A major emphasis on infrastructural development should focus, amongst other things, on job creation, poverty eradication and an expanded public works programme.

### **Peace and Security**

We have noted the important progress made with our Crime Prevention Strategy. Our draft resolution proposes that ANC structures play an active role in expanding the role of Community Policing Forums from their important community-police liaison work to include a wider focus on community safety.

We are calling for the strengthening of the criminal justice system, in particular to more effectively deal with crimes against women and children.

The ANC will also be tracking the ongoing transformation of the SANDF and in particular we shall be focusing upon its capacity to respond to international peace-keeping responsibilities.

### **Transformation of the State and Governance**

This Policy Conference is proposing to our 51<sup>st</sup> Conference, that the ANC advocates the retention of the current proportional representation electoral system because of its inclusivity and nation-building features. However, we are also strongly recommending that the ANC actively review the constituency work of our public representatives to enhance accountability to communities.

Considerable emphasis was placed on ensuring that, as the ANC, we take up the transformational challenges in the local government sphere. We are proposing that the ANC creates institutional capacity aimed at giving systematic political support to cadres who are deployed in the local government sphere. We are proposing that national and provincial spheres of government must actively participate in the process of formulating Municipal Integrated Development Plans; and we are proposing that ANC branches must complement the functioning of Ward Committees to mobilise communities to participate actively in programmes of governance and socio-economic development.

In regard to the Public Service, we are proposing that the pace of transformation must be accelerated through the creation of a single, development-oriented and integrated system of public administration. Advances towards such a single public service should be done on an informed basis and be preceded by a review of the various capacity levels required by different government institutions.

### **Communications**

Our draft resolution on communications highlight our concern to ensure that there is much greater media diversity, that all languages are more effectively represented, especially on the Public Broadcaster.

One of the delegates at our Policy Conference, who happens to be deaf, had an important impact on the Commission on Communications and on our plenary session. She drew our attention to the often neglected fact that there are 4 million deaf people in South Africa. Accordingly, in our draft resolution to our 51<sup>st</sup> Conference, we are proposing that the Public Broadcaster should use "closed caption" technology on television – a system that enables deaf people to access subtitling on their TV screens with a decoder device.

## **International**

Our draft resolutions for the 51<sup>st</sup> Congress included important resolutions on international challenges confronting the ANC. Amongst other things, we are proposing an active ANC engagement with branches to empower and educate our grass-roots structures around NEPAD and the African Union (AU). We need to consolidate popular participation around the struggle to overcome Africa's crisis of underdevelopment.

## **Building the ANC**

The policy conference further resolved that fundamental to progress in implementing our programme is a strong ANC, at the head of all organized formations committed to fundamental change. The core of these forces, is the tripartite alliance plus SANCO, which the ANC will continue to build and consolidate. Further, the ANC, as a disciplined force of the left, pursuing the interests of the poor should continue with its principled ideological struggle against neo-liberalism and ultra-leftism.

Contrary to what is sometimes stated, our branches continue to exist as vibrant centers of democracy. This has been proven in the preparations for and conduct of this Policy Conference. The process of realignment and induction of our branches is nearing completion. This process has led to the rejuvenation of our structures at local, regional and provincial level. As we approach the Stellenbosch Congress, we do so with a greater number and better quality of ANC membership than that with which we approached Mafikeng in 1997.

Important in this process of organisation building has been the political induction of leadership at branch, regional and provincial level as well as ongoing political cadre development programmes.

Nevertheless, a lot more work needs to be done to strengthen our branches. This conference did not take a resolution on the building of organisation. The commission that discussed this question saw this matter as the subject of ongoing work leading up to our Congress, where a comprehensive resolution on organisation building will be taken.

## **Way Forward**

We shall be proceeding from this Policy Conference back to our branches with all of our draft resolutions. The full text of our draft resolutions will be available in the coming days. We will engage our own structures, our allied formations and the widest range of forces with these draft policy resolutions.

Our task will be to carry forward debates both in our branches and amongst the broader public. We call on the public to participate in this unprecedented policy development and evaluation process.

To engage in this ANC policy-making process is to take part in determining the future of South Africa. This process will culminate in the 51<sup>st</sup> Congress of the ANC in Stellenbosch in December.

This Congress will be a convention of ANC cadres. Indeed, a parliament of the people of South Africa.

## **Conclusion**

This conference has engaged in democratic and open debate. That debate has been a culmination of a series of democratic debates, involving our structures from branch to national level, our alliance partners and our people as a whole. The quality of these debates reflects the fact that the call we made at the Port Elizabeth National General Council for the building of a New Cadre is beginning to be realized throughout our movement. In this process, nobody was prevented from expressing his or her viewpoint, whether as an individual or as a collective representing a branch, province or our alliance partners.

Most heartening is that in commissions as well as in plenary, all ideas were aired and consensus was reached, even on the most difficult issues. This applies even to the resolution on the economy on which public perceptions do not accord with the character of our debates, within the ANC and within the Alliance.

Therefore, given the level and openness of the debate that has taken place, what emerges from this conference is a collective view that must bind us all. This does not mean that we wish to enforce an unnatural unity on our diverse movement. But at the same time none of us should act in a manner that undermines the decisions we have collectively taken here.

As the ANC we have a history and culture different from other movements. We are a movement with integrity, with discipline, which has been able to unite our people for national liberation. We have been very sensitive to questions of unity. Because unity is the rock upon which this movement is founded. Building and maintaining unity requires us to learn from our history and apply the lessons to the manner in which we relate to one another as comrades, to the manner in which we engage with our Alliance partners and to the way in which we interact with the broader set of progressive forces in our country.

It is because of this history and culture that we should appreciate the good work that we have done in this conference. It is this understanding that should inform us as we proceed with our work leading up to our December National Congress. If we remember these principles, our history, our culture we will remain strong, united, ready to complete our task of transforming South Africa into a truly democratic, non-racial and non-sexist society.

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# The eye of a needle: Nominations for the NEC open

The Electoral Commission, which was appointed by the NEC as required by the Constitution, has opened nominations for the National Executive Committee. Forms have been circulated to branches, regions and provinces, and the closing date for provincial nominations is 15 November 2002.

The process will start at branch level to ensure that the selection and election of leaders to lead the movement for the next five years resides firmly in the hands of the broad membership of the ANC. The discussion document which guided us during the

## Tasks for branches, regions and provinces arising from the National Policy Conference

► The **draft resolutions** will be distributed from late-October in *Umrabulo 17*. Branches, regions and province are expected to look at the resolutions, and to see whether the issues they raised in their own draft resolutions have been adequately addressed. In addition, we must also discuss the benchmarks we want to set for the Second Decade of Liberation (2004-2014) and towards the centenary of the ANC (2012).

► A draft preamble to the 1997 **Strategy and Tactics**, that reflects on the balance of forces at the moment and the major changes since 1997 will be distributed to structures by mid-November for discussion.

► By the time of the National Policy Conference only three provinces – Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Gauteng – had discussed and submitted **constitutional amendments**. The other provinces have to discuss this as a matter of urgency. In addition, *Conference Update 3* (due out in November) will contain all constitutional amendments submitted to date for consideration by all structures.

► No discussion paper was prepared on **Building the ANC**, but *Conference Update 3* will also contain the key issues for discussion on this topic, laying the basis for discussions at 51<sup>st</sup> National Conference and for a draft resolution on Organisational design.

► Branches, regions and the PECs must ensure that branch and other **delegates to Conference** are adequately prepared to participate in discussions at conference, by ensuring that they attend all preparatory meetings in the regions and province.

realignment process, '**Through the Eye of the Needle**', emphasised that the leadership collective of the movement, at any level, should satisfy the character of the ANC – a revolutionary democratic movement; a non-racial and non-sexist national movement; a broad national democratic movement; a mass movement and a leader of the democratic and progressive forces.

Furthermore, an ANC leader should, among other things, understand ANC policy and be able to apply it under all conditions, which should include an understanding of the country and the world we live in; of the balance of forces; and of how to continually change the balance of forces in favour of the motive forces for change. An ANC leaders should also constantly seek to improve her/his capacity to serve the people, win the confidence of the people in his/her day-to-day work, be accessible and flexible, and lead by example.

Our leadership should be above reproach in their political and social conduct – as defined by our revolutionary morality – be honest, have integrity, not be corruptible and actively fight against corruption. Leaders should seek to influence and to be influenced by others in the collective and should be individuals that have the conviction to state their views boldly and openly within constitutional structures of the movement.

Before the Mafikeng Conference in 1997, the conference paper on '**Challenges of leadership in the current phase**' provided the following guidance:

“In so far as leadership elections are concerned, Conference will need to ensure an NEC that reflects the main areas of ANC work, which include governance and full-time mass work. The latter entails ensuring that there are sufficient full-time NEC members in the ANC, as well as leaders from the working class and other sectors of society not deployed in government.

Organised and unorganised workers should take active part in ANC structures, but the interest of a class are not necessarily and mechanically articulated by members of that class.

“In terms of gender balance, members should deliberately identify women who are capable of and/or have the potential to assume leadership positions. And, in nominating leaders in general, the question of their commitment to gender equality should be put on the agenda

“An issue that needs thorough examinations is that of rejuvenation of the leadership in terms of electing young cadres who have done well in various fields. There are graduates of the Youth League, MK, SASCO,

etc. or other young workers and professionals – young men and women who have a contribution to make at this level. This is important not only for purposes of the unique contribution the youth can and should make in the NEC, but because we should actively start building the leadership of the future in actual practice today.

“It is also critical that Conference addresses the question of the track record required for individuals, to be elected into the NEC, ...to help ensure that people demonstrate a consistent track record in ANC work before serious responsibilities are thrust on them.”

A number of the above issues may still be relevant in 2002, as we discuss nominations for the NEC. However, we must take in consideration some of the changes that have occurred since then, by reflecting on such issues as:-

- Whereas in 1997 we defined the main tasks of ANC leadership as governance and full-time mass work (which includes deployment in the ANC, in the broader Alliance and civil society), shouldn't we broaden this to include other centres of power such as the arena for the battle of ideas, the economy and so forth?
- How do we ensure that the NEC in its composition represents the broad motive forces of the NDR?
- We have set the gender quota for ANC structures as 30%, has this been effective to engender the movement, do we need to move towards 30% as a minimum as proposed by the National Policy Conference Resolutions?
- How do we ensure race and geographical balance, without reducing this to bean counting or falling prey to the demon of tribalism?
- What kind of balance should there be between those deployed in government work and those outside?

We should also be reminded of the constitutional provision – Rule 11.3 (i) – that “a person shall have been a paid up member of the ANC for at least five years, before s/he can be nominated to the NEC of the ANC”.



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## The nominations process in brief

► Nominations will start at branch level, and should take place in properly constituted Branch General Meetings. Each branch can nominate up to six people for the Officials and 60 additional members. The branch nomination forms are submitted to the region.

► The REC consolidates the nominations of all the branches in the region into one list and convenes a RGC (which consist of delegates from all branches in good standing in the region) that then discusses and nominates from this consolidated list, 6 comrades as Officials and 60 additional members. The REC submits the nomination forms with the regional nominations as agreed on by the RGC to the province.

► The PWC and PEC receive the list of nominations from all the regions in the province and compile it into a consolidated list of nominations. The consolidated list is tabled before a PGC (which also consists of branch delegates from all branches in good standing in the province). The PGC then discusses and reaches consensus on six names from the province for Officials and the 60 additional members of the NEC. The provincial nominations will then be submitted to the Electoral Commission.

► The 50<sup>th</sup> National Conference in 1997 mandated the NEC to make a recommendation before the 51<sup>st</sup> Conference on the right of the Leagues to nominate. The NEC meeting of 27 September 2002 discussed this matter and decided that because Youth and Women's League members are expected to carry out ANC duties like any other ANC member, they should be able to nominate for the ANC NEC. It noted that the Leagues' delegates to National Conference are voting delegates. The NEC will therefore sponsor a constitutional amendment to this effect at National Conference.

► The Leagues will therefore be required to nominate for the NEC before Conference. They are required to follow the same democratic process, from branch to region to province. Their respective NECs will receive the nominations from League provinces, compile a consolidated list for discussion and agreement in their NECs. The League nominations of six Officials and 60 additional members will be submitted to the Electoral Commission. At this stage, the nominations of the Leagues will have the same status as that of a province.

► After the deadline of 15 November 2002, the Electoral Commission will compile a consolidated list of all nominations received from the provinces and the Leagues. This will be distributed to structures before Conference and will be tabled at Conference.

► The Constitution also provides for further nominations from the floor at Conference, by any voting delegate, which must be seconded by at least 25% of voting delegates to Conference for such a name to be added to the ballot paper.

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