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# NEC Bulletin

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## Win a decisive victory for transformation

The ANC needs to win a decisive victory in the 2004 elections to continue and accelerate the process of transformation and democratisation.

This, the NEC said, needed to be preceded by a vigorous campaign to ensure that all adult South Africans have ID books and are registered to vote. It is important that all South Africans are able to exercise their democratic right to vote for the party of their choice, and to take an active part in determining their own future.

This poses a particular challenge to the structures of the ANC over the coming weeks and months. The results of Census 2001 suggest there are a considerable amount of people in various parts of the country who are not yet on the voters roll. There are around 7.5 million eligible voters who are not registered to vote, as opposed to 18 million who are registered.

It is estimated that there are around 4.2 million people in the age group 20 to 30 years who are not registered to vote. There are around 1.5 million people in the 30 to 40 age group – and almost a million in the 40 to 50 age group – who are not registered as voters.

The highest numbers of unregistered voters are found in Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal, Western Cape, North West and Eastern Cape. Structures of the ANC need to use the information from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and Census 2001 to ensure that our efforts are targeted at those areas which have the highest numbers of unregistered voters.

Already branches have begun a door-to-door campaign to encourage people to apply for ID documents. These documents are not only important for the elections. They are essential for empowering people at a number of levels. Having an ID book enables a

The National Executive Committee held a meeting from **18-19 July 2003**. It discussed preparations for the 2004 elections, ANC Women's League conference, state of organisation and the work of the NEC committees.

person to get an education – to write matric and register at a technical college or university. They can apply for a permanent job and receive unemployment insurance benefits. With an ID book, people can apply for social grants, access other government services, and get a birth certificate and other official documentation for their own children. They can open bank accounts, apply for loans and enter into contracts.

The ID campaign will continue through July and August. The campaign to register voters will culminate in a national registration weekend on 8-9 November.

The NEC said that the achievement of a decisive ANC victory in the 2004 national and provincial elections would be essential for speeding up the process of change and transformation in South Africa.

The results of the 2001 Census, which confirm most of the assessments made by National Conference, underline the challenges the country faces. They confirm that we are making important progress in important areas affecting our people – areas such as education, health, housing, water, electricity, etc. They confirm that our population is growing, though at a lower rate than GDP growth. They also confirm that there is an increase in migration from rural to urban areas, and specifically to Gauteng.

The census results also confirm that employment has grown at a rate far below the rate at which the number of job seekers has grown. This means that the absolute number and proportion of unemployed people in South Africa has increased since 1996. We have made significant progress in stabilising and rebuilding the economy, and setting it on a course for increased

growth and job creation. The challenge we face in the next five years is to significantly accelerate these efforts and address the plight of the many people who still suffer at the hands of poverty and unemployment.

▶ A decisive ANC victory is important not only for transformation in South Africa, but for strengthening the process of change on the African continent as a whole. With a strong mandate from the South African people, the ANC is in a position to play a key role in promoting a progressive agenda for the regeneration of Africa, and to be an important progressive voice in the transformation of global relations.

Much work has already been done in preparation for the election campaign. Elections structures have

been established at national, provincial, regional and local (municipal) level. Branch Election Teams (BETs) are in the process of being set up at ward level. Training workshops have been held for provincial, regional and local election teams. In August, training will be held for almost 3,000 BETs across the country.

The 2004 election will coincide with the tenth anniversary of our first democratic election. The country and the world will therefore be looking to the ANC to continue and intensify the process of change which it initiated in 1994. This means that the branches and members of the organisation need to work consistently and purposefully over the next few months to lay the basis for a decisive and historic ANC election victory.

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## Women's League prepares for conference

**T**he ANC Women's League is on track to hold its national conference from 28-30 August in Cape Town, as regions and provinces prepare to hold conferences in the coming weeks.

The NEC received a report on progress towards conference which indicated that, despite progress in most provinces, there were a number of challenges remaining in KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo. The National Working Committee (NWC) of the Women's League (WL) has been engaging with these provinces to address these challenges.

The WL has been assisted by the ANC Organising Unit to verify the membership of the league in all provinces. This process has highlighted a number of problems, including the distribution of ANC recruiter packs, the weakness of ANC structures in some areas, lack of human and other resources in the league, and the

lack of coordination of ANC and WL programmes in some provinces.

Regions are allowed to hold their conferences if they have launched branches in at least 70 percent of the wards in which the ANC has branches in the region. The league recognises that at present strength it is unlikely to be able to launch branches in all ANC branches.

A political discussion programme has been developed from regional conferences. Regions are going to be discussing organisational challenges, challenges of leadership, strategy and tactics, and the role of the league in leading women in the National Democratic Revolution.

Structures should use the report of the WL Consultative Conference held in October 2001 as the basis for discussions and programmes.

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## First year of the African Union

**The NEC noted the important** progress made in the first year of the African Union, and highlighted the many challenges which the organisation needed to tackle.

These include the process towards the establishment of the Peace and Security Council, the Pan-African Parliament, the Court of Justice and the African Peer Review Mechanism.

The meeting expressed its appreciation to President Thabo Mbeki, in particular, for the outstanding leadership he provided during South Africa's tenure as the chair of the AU. It also expressed support and appreciation for the work President Mbeki and Deputy President Jacob Zuma continue to do to bring peace and development to the continent.

### Message to Madiba on his 85 birthday

**A delegation from the NEC** went to Cde Nelson Mandela's Houghton home on 18 July to convey the best wishes of the movement on the occasion of his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday. The delegation gave Madiba a large card signed by all the members of the NEC.

The message from the NEC paid tribute to a life spent in service of the people and in pursuit of the ideals of national liberation, democracy and freedom. It said the ANC was privileged and honoured to count Madiba as one of the great leaders of our movement, who continues to provide advice, inspiration and leadership.

Madiba was very appreciative of the gift and gesture. He said that he continued to draw strength and inspiration from the support which he received from the ANC and the democratic movement.

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# Branches alive and active in communities

Reports from provinces show a general trend towards ANC branches that are active in working to address the challenges facing their communities. In discussing the state of organisation, the NEC considered a number of instances from various parts of the country where branches were taking a lead in addressing community concerns and problems.

Among the kind of things which branches have been concentrating on are:

- reducing levels of crime and random killings;
- combating HIV/AIDS and its effects through focusing on home-based care, education, prevention, counselling, forming community structures and distributing condoms;
- mobilising people to access social grants and monitoring pay-out points;
- forming and supporting cooperatives for the unemployed;
- assisting with the opening of schools at the beginning of the year, with public representatives adopting schools, volunteers helping to repaint or fence schools, and fighting against vandalising of school property.

There is also a growing programme to deepen the political consciousness of members. Activities include political education for regional conferences in the Western Cape; a provincial political school in Gauteng; weekly political education classes in some Free State branches; a seminar on the anniversary of the Freedom Charter in Limpopo; regular political classes for ANC structures and COSATU shopstewards in KwaZulu Natal; and political education in all the regions of Eastern Cape around issues such as *'Through the Eye of the Needle'* and the role of the Alliance.

The countrywide report-back meetings held in the beginning of the year from the 51<sup>st</sup> National Conference also helped to develop members' understanding of the direction of the movement for the next five years and the immediate tasks.

By the end of the 2001/2 re-alignment process, we had launched branches in more than 60 percent of wards in the country. This figure has not increased much, and many branches continue to limit themselves to 100 members. To address this problem, the Free State has set a target of a minimum of 200 members for all its branches, which appears to be bearing fruit.

Gauteng, Northern Cape and Western Cape, who launched their newly-aligned regions in 2001, are all preparing for regional conferences. Headquarters is in

the process of conducting audits in preparations for these conference. Most regions in Western Cape and Northern Cape should be ready to go to conference before the deadline of 30 August 2003. Gauteng has asked to defer all their regional conferences, except Johannesburg, to concentrate on the election campaign.

A number of the new RECs are struggling to find their feet due to problems of capacity and the larger geographical areas they are now required to serve. The employment of full-time Regional Secretaries is beginning to make an impact; but regional offices generally need much more strengthening and capacity.

Organisational structures, from the branch to the PEC, are working hard to ensure that the ANC gives direction to the programmes of government, and that we mobilise communities around government programmes. With a few exceptions, our caucuses at all levels are functioning well.

The review of public representatives, which is currently taking place as part of the List Process, as well as the 10 year review of parliament and the legislatures, should enable the ANC to measure the impact of our public representatives on constituencies and organisational structures.

The movement remains firmly in the driving seat of the processes of transformation in all provinces under our control; and our people continue to place their confidence in the ANC and its leadership.

While branches are increasingly strengthening the mass character of the ANC, a number of areas still need further work. These include:

- finalising the review of the Membership system and strengthening the capacity of regional offices to capture and administer the membership system;
- strengthening our support to branches, implementing a more widespread political education programme for branches, and building on the emerging activism of branches;
- ensuring NEC deployed assist PECs in building branches;
- more effort to strengthen the capacity of RECs and regional offices, so that they are able to service branches more effectively and can become centres of coordination of the movement in their districts and metros.

The elections campaign will be a real test of strength of our state of organisation. The reports indicate that, despite the problems raised, we have the capacity to ensure the movement rises to the occasion.

## REPORTS OF NEC COMMITTEES

The NEC considered reports on the work of its various sub-committees, which were appointed at the beginning of the year to discuss and process policy and organisational issues for consideration by the NWC and NEC.

**Archives:** The Archives Unit continues to process the collection of material from ANC offices abroad for transfer to the ANC archives at the University of Fort Hare. The committee has also been involved, together with various universities, in developing capacity among archivists, and in establishing the Oral History Project.

**Awards:** The deadline for submissions from provinces for the **2003 Achievement Awards** for best performing ANC branch, Women's League branch, Youth League branch and group of ANC councillors will be 31 October. The committee is also working on awards for **veterans** of the movement. Veterans are defined as comrades over 60 years of age who have been members of the ANC for over 30 years. They are also considering medals for service, merit and valour to former **combatants** of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

**Communications:** The committee has been working on a communications strategy for the 2004 elections, which has been used to brief provincial, regional and local election task teams. The committee also prepared a submission on the SABC draft editorial policies, which is available on the ANC website.

**Constitutional:** The committee considered a number of issues around the new electoral law, which should be approved by Cabinet and tabled in Parliament soon. The committee also tabled for discussion the issue of the transformation of the judiciary, against the backdrop of the Judges' Symposium, held for the first time since the 1930s. The NEC welcomed the opportunity for the judiciary to discuss its role and function in a democratic South Africa, and urged all South Africans to familiarise themselves with the important issues that the symposium raised.

**Economic Transformation:** The committee was closely involved in preparations for the Growth and Development Summit, held in June. It will also prepare for a discussion at the next NEC meeting on the issue of black economic empowerment.

**International Relations:** While the committee had only met once, the International Affairs Unit at headquarters has been involved in a number of activities. These include interaction with parties in Zimbabwe on the need for dialogue to resolve the problems the country is

facing; interaction with various parties in the Democratic Republic of Congo; involvement in the 'Stop the War' campaign; and meetings with various parties and representatives from other African countries and further afield.

**Legislature and Governance:** The committee has been processing a number of matters arising from National Conference resolutions, particularly on the transformation of the state and governance. Areas in which work is ongoing include cross-boundary municipalities, combating corruption, performance management in legislatures, and traditional leadership.

**National Disciplinary Committee:** The committee has dealt with three cases since the beginning of the year. The first matter was of eight comrades from the North West for alleged offences at National Conference, who were acquitted due to lack of evidence. The findings in the other two cases, of NEC member Tony Yengeni and National Chairperson Mosiuoa Lekota, will be announced shortly.

**Peace and Stability:** The committee considered, among other things, the anti-terrorism bill currently before Parliament. The NEC agreed with the committee's assessment that while the bill was necessary to address a problem which has both national and international dimensions, there were sections of the bill which did not accord with the spirit of the constitution or the principles of the ANC. It was agreed that the committee should review these sections and make proposals to the NWC.

**Political Education and Training:** The process towards establishing a formal ANC Political School is progressing well. The induction of all the newly-elected PECs and RECs is complete, while branch leadership induction is ongoing. The committee is also developing a paper that focuses on '*Careerism and the ANC*'.

**Religious Affairs:** Work is being done to strengthen the work of provincial CRAs and to develop a CRA communication strategy. The commission continues to provide support to the Moral Regeneration Movement, and will shortly organise a consultation on the work of the ANC chaplaincy.

**Social Transformation:** The committee has been engaged in activity to expand access to the Child Support Grant; encourage people to apply for and collect ID books; and accelerate the completion of the report on a Comprehensive Social Security System. The health and education sector committees have also held successful meetings.

▶ NEXT NEC MEETING: 12-14 SEPTEMBER 2003