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NEC Bulletin

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Start work now for a decisive ANC victory

Work must now start in earnest for a decisive ANC victory in the 2004 elections, the NEC said as it met to finalise preparations for the launch of the election campaign next year.

While the people of South Africa have consistently chosen to work with the ANC to build a better life, the movement cannot take their support in an election for granted. The results of the election depends on many factors, such as the number of people registered, the extent of voter mobilisation and campaigning, and the number of people who turn out at voting stations on election day.

It is therefore essential that all cadres of the democratic movement are involved as campaign workers throughout the campaign from its launch until voting ends on election day. All election structures have now been set up and responsibilities assigned. The NEC noted that the campaign planning process was almost complete, and that the movement and its allies were ready to begin the hard work of campaigning.

The ANC will launch its election campaign at a national rally in Pietermaritzburg on 11 January 2004. This launch will coincide with the ANC's annual January 8th celebrations, marking the day in 1912 on which the organisation was formed. Provinces will launch their campaigns on the following weekend.

However, even as we launch our campaign we also face the massive task of registering around eight million people over the age of 18 who are not yet on the voters' roll. The NEC reviewed the ANC's campaign to encourage people to register as voters during the IEC's registration weekend on 8-9 November. It noted with appreciation that over three million South Africans

The National Executive Committee held a meeting from **28-29 November 2003**. It discussed preparations for the 2004 elections, voter registration, the list process and the review of MPs.

arrived at voting stations to register as new voters or to re-register. There were around 1.5 million new registrations and 2 million re-registrations of people who had moved or whose voting district had changed. It was particularly encouraging that youth constituted such a high proportion of the new registrations.

However, there are still millions of eligible people who are not yet registered. The NEC urged these people to continue to register with the municipal electoral officers in their areas. It also resolved to work together with the IEC and other organisations to mobilise people to make use of their final opportunity to register on the weekend of 24-25 January 2004.

The success of the campaign to get people to register as voters will have a big impact on the voter turnout and the results of the election.

List process a sign of stability

The NEC assessed progress in the process of selecting ANC candidates for national and provincial legislatures for the 2004 elections, which culminated in the National List Conference held on 21 November.

The meeting's assessment was that the list process demonstrated a high level of political maturity among ANC structures and members, and is a signal of organisational stability and confidence.

The ANC remains unique among political parties in South Africa for the extent of internal democracy and transparency in the selection of its candidates.

The provisional lists adopted by the National List Committee will now be subjected to a process of appeals and objections. The results of the ANC's review

of serving public representatives will also be factored into these lists before they are submitted to the NEC for finalisation on 15 December.

Review aims to improve public representatives

The NEC considered a report of the review of serving MPs and MPLs, which has been conducted alongside the list process. The review will be used to empower individual public representatives to improve their performance in legislatures and in their constituencies, and will enable the ANC to identify and correct problems in the functioning of its caucuses, study groups and general coordination of legislatures.

The review of 571 MPs and MPLs was done on the basis of four forms completed for each person. The forms asked for basic information about the member, questions about the performance of the ANC structures in the legislatures and information about constituency and organisational work done by members.

More than half of the ANC's public representatives at national and provincial level have served since 1994. These MPs and MPLs are drawn from all spheres of society, rural and urban, and from different generations. As individuals and as collectives they have built up a considerable body of experience and expertise. The review concluded, however, that there were important skills gaps in most legislatures, particularly as focus shifts towards implementation.

While the majority of MPs and MPLs have carried out their work with diligence and have shown commitment to representing the constituencies they come from, the Review Committee identified recommendations to improve the performance of public representatives and legislatures. These recommendations include that:

The list and deployment process should make space for public representatives to get exposure to both national and provincial legislatures, as working in different spheres of government adds to their overall development and experience. We should also bring into the legislatures, people below the age of 30 years to ensure that we build a body of experience for the next terms.

The report should be seen as a contribution towards caucus planning for the next term and will be considered as part of the work of the Organisational Design Committee.

The Secretaries Forum, which consists of the Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General and Provincial Secretaries, should have a strategic session with the Chief Whips' Forum after the elections to consider the issues raised on constituency work.

Consideration should be given to setting up a human resources desk at headquarters, that would develop and update a national cadre database, support

the work of national and provincial deployment committees, implement a programme to identify cadres for training, assist comrades with career-pathing and link with the Political School to ensure the ongoing political development of ANC public representatives.

The ANC review methodology be refined, particularly in preparation for a review of ANC councillors.

The review of public representatives should take place twice during a term, during the second and fourth years respectively.

Reports of disunity are unfounded

The NEC noted the extensive media coverage of the Hefer Commission currently underway in Bloemfontein. The meeting dismissed as baseless reports that the events surrounding this commission were adversely affecting the unity or work of the ANC. As has been evident in the successful conduct of the list process, neither the ANC's membership nor its leadership has been distracted from their organisational tasks and ongoing political work.

The NEC agreed to discuss any relevant issues raised during the course of the commission in a comprehensive manner following the conclusion of this process.

ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

Unveilings: There will be unveilings of the tombstones of cde Joe Modise on 6 December 2003 at the Walter Sisulu Hall in Randburg, and cde Walter Sisulu on 16 December 2003 at the Newclare Cemetery, starting at 10h00. The unveiling of the tombstone of Ma Francis Baard is likely to take place in early 2004.

Legislature and Governance Lekgotla: A report of the Legislature and Governance Committee Lekgotla was tabled. It was agreed the L&G Committee and Political Committee should conduct a review of portfolio committees before the elections to make comprehensive recommendations on the restructuring of committees for the next term.

National House of Traditional Leaders: The Secretary General and delegation met with members of the National House of Traditional

leaders. The meeting discussed the role of the ... contained in the White paper. It was agreed to hold House, the approach to the role of th

INTERNATIONAL MATTERS

The NEC received a report on the following international matters:

Rwanda: A bilateral meeting was held with the Rwanda Democratic Front to discuss party-to-party cooperation.

Sudan: A delegation visited the Sudan and held bilateral meetings with the SPLM/A leadership. The delegations from Sudan briefed the South African delegation on the unfolding peace process and raised the need for South Africa's involvement in the process.

United Kingdom: A delegation from the ANC was invited to attend the Labour Party Congress. The delegation met with the Labour leadership and discussed bilateral relations. It also met with the Labour-aligned Westminster Foundation.

Socialist International Congress: The delegation led by the President attended the Congress in Brazil and actively participated in proceedings. Bilateral meetings were held with a number of delegations at the Congress.

Brazil: During the official visit of President Lula Da Silva, a delegation from the ANC held a meeting with the Workers' Party (PT) and other parties from Brazil. The discussions focused on developments in Southern Africa and bilateral relations between the two countries and movements.

Pan African Parliament: The Pan African Parliament will have its first sitting in January 2004 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The South African parliament elected its five representatives to this historic meeting. They are Frene Ginwala (ANC), MJ Mahlangu (ANC), Makhosazana Njobe (ANC), Barend Guildenhys (NP) and Professor Harriett Ngubane (IFP). Three of the five elected members are women.

Sri Lanka: The ANC met with a delegation from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to share experiences of South Africa's multi-party negotiations and transition. The organisation also met with the Sri Lankan foreign minister. It is hoped this exposure to South Africa's experiences may provide some assistance to the peace process in Sri Lanka.

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- ▶ NEXT NEC MEETING: 15 DECEMBER 2003
 - ▶ NEC LEKGOTLA: 15-17 JANUARY 2003