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NEC Bulletin

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Build the branch to implement our transformation programme

The central task of the ANC at the moment is to build the branches of the movement to implement the programme of transformation outlined in the 2004 and 2006 election manifestos.

The NEC emphasised that whatever the challenges of the current period, nothing would distract the movement from its central and urgent task to unite the entirety of our movement, under the leadership of our constitutional structures, to implement the transformation programme that constitutes our popular mandate.

The NEC reviewed the extent to which branches and other structures have made the objectives of the 2004 and 2006 manifestos the central features of their ongoing programmes. It noted that these objectives should drive ANC branches and engage the membership of the ANC in practical work towards the achievement of a better life for all.

The NEC noted that the unequivocal mandate received by the ANC could not be implemented by government without the active participation of ANC and Alliance structures as the drivers of fundamental social transformation and development.

In this regard, ANC branches, regions and provinces need to ensure that communities participate in Ward Committees and that these structures are effective. They need to ensure that ANC public representatives hold regular Izimbizo and that matters raised by the people in these forums are addressed by the relevant authorities.

The ANC must act as the leading defender of the institutions of the democratic state. This also means that our movement must act as the principal force that ensures that these institutions live up to, and conduct themselves in a manner that fully respects, the objectives of our democracy.

Branches and structures must also take responsibility for monitoring, among other things, the provision of free basic services, proper sanitation, housing, roads,

The National Executive Committee held a meeting on **21-22 July 2006**. The meeting discussed implementation of the ANC's transformation programme, Alliance bilaterals and the relationship between ANC members and business.

and health care. Because they are rooted among the people, ANC branches should be the first to detect cases of corruption, maladministration and abuse of state resources, and swiftly deal with these matters.

Our structures should help identify indigents in our communities and work with government to ensure necessary interventions are made to alleviate the dire conditions of these people. This should be part of the community work of ANC branches and members, ensuring that we are always visible among our people, not only during elections and high-profile campaigns. We have a duty to ensure that ANC members actively support the Community Development Workers.

The ANC must also be actively involved in the elaboration and implementation of local economic development programmes and the development process in general, drawing in the largest numbers of our people.

As the country strives for the intensification of skills development, ANC structures should engage the teachers' unions and other education bodies to work with our schools to assist in creating the climate for teaching, learning and discipline, and providing career guidance, ensuring that young people are better informed about the skills required by our economy and society.

Our structures, working in partnership with communities and professional bodies, should help mentor young people and even assist with extra classes, among other interventions, mobilising retired teachers and other professionals to teach such important subjects

as mathematics, science, accountancy and economics, especially in schools in the townships and rural areas.

Our structures should be the first to identify dilapidated and under-resourced schools and those children from poor households who do not access the school feeding scheme or school transport.

Given these and other tasks of ANC branches, the NEC reaffirmed the importance of the Imvuselelo campaign currently underway in ANC structures across the country. This campaign, which will continue over several phases, is primarily concerned with the revitalisation of ANC branches and the engagement of its members in mass work among communities.

The meeting agreed that the members of the NEC need to be providing consistent and active support to this programme through participation in branch Imvuselelo programmes. The deployment of NEC members to these tasks has already begun, and will intensify in the coming months.

Engagements with Alliance partners

The NEC received a report on recent bilateral meetings between the organisation and its Alliance partners, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

Two meetings have been held with the SACP, among other things, to exchange views on the SACP Central Committee's discussion document published for public comment in *Bua Komanisi* in May. The ANC's initial response was distributed in *NWC Briefing*, June 2006. The meetings identified issues for further detailed discussion in the next bilateral, scheduled for 14 August.

One meeting was held with COSATU, which covered, among other things, joint political education programmes among Alliance partners, COSATU's jobs and poverty campaign, and preparations for COSATU's 9th National Congress, taking place in September. A follow-up meeting is scheduled to take place in the next two weeks for more detailed discussion.

The NEC welcomed the tone and spirit of these engagements. It welcomed the determination of all partners to ensure that these discussions strengthen the Alliance and advance the national democratic struggle.

The NEC extended congratulations and best wishes to the SACP on the occasion of their 85th anniversary, which is to be celebrated on 31 July.

The NEC also wished COSATU and its affiliates well in their preparations for COSATU's 9th National Congress.

Strengthening guidelines on business activities

The NEC received and debated a report of an NEC task team on issues arising out of the participation of ANC leaders in business. The remit of the task team was "to provide political and moral guidelines to the ANC as a whole, particularly the leadership, on the issue of participation in business activities".

Over the years the ANC has debated and taken resolutions on the challenges that have been thrown up as it proceeds with the project of rebuilding a post-apartheid society.

The NEC agreed that the foundations for a policy framework are strong, but that more detailed work needed to be done to identify the specific elements of such a framework.

The NEC reiterated some of the basic principles of its approach, including that:

- all ANC members are bound by the solemn declaration of membership, and should be guided at all times by the principles of service, sacrifice and selflessness;
- all ANC members have a right to earn a living in a profession or occupation of their choice, which may, in some cases, result in the accumulation of wealth;
- those who hold political office in the ANC or government have the same right as other citizens to participate in any economic activity within the confines of existing codes and regulations;
- all ANC members should, in their professional lives, conduct themselves in a manner and style that reflects the ethical positions of the movement and promote its aims and objectives;
- the movement should accept its role and responsibility to provide guidance to its members involved in business and other professions;
- the character of the ANC as a multi-class organisation with a bias towards the working class and the poor should not be compromised;
- the ANC has the right to raise funds from its members and the general public without those who donate money seeking or being allowed to exercise undue influence in the ANC or in society.

The NEC has instructed the task team to develop specific guidelines that will address gaps identified in discussion. These guidelines will be discussed within the structures of the ANC in the context of preparations for the ANC National Policy Conference and 52nd National Conference, both to be held next year.

Call for ceasefire in Middle East

Developments in the Middle East have raised the threat of a regional war, which will seriously endanger regional and international peace and security.

In expressing grave concern at the situation, the NEC condemned Israel's collective punishment of both the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. The disproportionate response of Israel and the use of military force against civilian targets, resulting in hundreds of deaths and injuries; the massive destruction of vital life-supporting infrastructure; and the displacement of over half a million people can never be justified. These actions are against international law and the Geneva Convention.

The NEC urged all parties to desist from any actions that may exacerbate the conflict. The meeting expressed grave concern about the catastrophic humanitarian crisis in Gaza and Lebanon, for which Israel's aggression is responsible. The NEC called for:

- an immediate ceasefire by all sides;

- a negotiated solution of the Israeli and Palestinian prisoner issue;
- the UN Security Council to discharge its responsibilities and act with urgency to enforce an immediate ceasefire;
- the UN, on the basis of various UN resolutions, to seek a peaceful comprehensive solution;
- the international community and the South African government and people to respond to the catastrophic humanitarian tragedy in the region.

The NEC noted the anger and concerns of many sectors of our people – including political parties, trade unions and religious leaders – and resolved to meet with all sectors of civil society to discuss their concerns and demands.

The NEC reiterated the unwavering support of the ANC for the cause of the Palestinian people.

Preparations begin for ANC 52nd National Conference

Preparations for the ANC's 52nd National Conference, to be held in December 2007, are set to begin, with the establishment by the NEC of the National Conference Preparatory Committee (NCPC).

The National Conference is the highest decision-making structure of the ANC, and is held every five years. The National Conference is preceded by an extensive process of deliberation within all structures of the movement, beginning at the level of the ANC branch. This includes the holding of a National Policy Conference, which is due to take place in June/July 2007.

Confidence in Luthuli House reaffirmed

The NEC noted recent media reports about the functioning of its Johannesburg headquarters, Chief Albert Luthuli House. The meeting rejected these reports as false and malicious.

The NEC expressed its full confidence in the leadership and staff deployed at Luthuli House.

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▶ NEXT NEC MEETING: 15-17 SEPTEMBER 2006