

# **POLITICAL REPORT**

## **Northern Cape**

### **7th Provincial Conference**

**Presented by Provincial Chairperson**

**Comrade John Block**

**2012**





**POLITICAL REPORT TO THE 7<sup>TH</sup> PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE ANC, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE', BY THE PROVINCIAL  
CHAIRPERSON, COMRADE JOHN FIKILE BLOCK, SIYANDA  
REGION. 7-10 JUNE 2012**

Comrade President of the ANC, Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma

**Members of the NEC**

The Deputy Chairperson of the Province and members of the PEC

The Chairperson of the Veterans League and Veterans of our movement

The Chairperson of the Women's League and members

The Chairperson of the Youth League and members

The Leadership of the SACP, Cosatu and Sanco

The Leadership of MKMVA

Leadership of Contralesa

The leadership of Sasco and Cosas

The leadership of the Regions

Honoured guest and Friends

Dear delegates

We are gathered here in Siyanda to firstly celebrate the achievement of holding our 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial conference under different conditions than those under which we convened four years ago. We are convened under the theme ``Towards a 100 years of Selfless struggle''

We have completely moved away from the embarrassing conditions demonstrated at our 6<sup>th</sup> Provincial conference at Moshaweng in the John Taolo Gaetsewe region on the 26-28 August 2008.



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That conference was characterised by violence, chaos, ill - discipline and complete disregard for the dignity of the ANC.

Today, we are gathered, united, to celebrate the Centenary of our Movement. We have convened at our branches with the majority of branches meeting under normal conditions free of violence and disruptions.

We have a Leadership Collective that did not interfere in the task of branch meetings or tried to influence branches in the nominations processes.

We are meeting here under no threat of violence, intimidation or under the threat of court interdicts.

That, comrades, is the true culture of the ANC. Our gathering here today, is to declare that:

- Never again shall violence be a feature of ANC gatherings
- Never again shall disruptions feature in our meetings
- Never again shall leadership positions destroy the unity of the ANC
- Never again shall factions undermine the integrity of our structures
- Never again shall ill - discipline be a character of our members or leaders of our movement
- The unity of our movement is non- negotiable, finish and klaar.

The year 2012 is an important year for the African National Congress. It is a year filled with many momentous moments and occasions in the world, in the continent and in our country.

- 117<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary of the Langeberg rebellion and the beheading of chief Luka Jantjie
- The centenary of the African National Congress: Celebrating a 100 years of selfless struggle
- 100 years birthday of our own veteran, Ntate Wilson Maropong on the 07<sup>th</sup> January 2012
- The celebrations of the life and times of the 12 Presidents of the African National Congress
- Our Province will be celebrating the life and times of Inkosi Albert Luthuli
- The crisis in the Eurozone: Spain is in a double dip recession, Italy has a technocrat government, the Netherlands has to elect a new government, Greece is struggling to set up a government, France elected a Socialist leader for the first time since Francois Mitterand, Portugal is considering removing four public holidays. All in the name of managing their public debt and implementing austerity measures. Public debt if not controlled can cause social and political unrest and change governments.
- The American Presidential elections in November this year
- The hosting of the July Olympics in London, England; 4 years after the last Olympics in China, in the year of the Moshaweng conference in 2008
- Vladimir Putin was again elected as President of Russia

- Venezuela, Mexico, Taiwan all will be having Presidential elections
- China will be having the Communist Party Congress in October, their leadership transition is politically managed to maintain unity, change and renewal. The political development of China is unique in the world and China is becoming the biggest economic player in the world today.
- The difficulties in Libya, Egypt, Kenya, Mali, Guine Bissau, South Sudan and Sudan
- The conviction of Charles Taylor by the ICC and the forthcoming trials of Laurent Gbagbo and the son of Muammar Gaddafi
- The preparations towards the election of the chairperson of the Africa Union
- The 100 years of Tata Walter Sisulu on the 18 May 2012
- The June Policy conference of the ANC
- The 53<sup>rd</sup> National Congress of the ANC
- The 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Conference of the ANC Northern Cape
- The 100 anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic, but unlike the Titanic, the ANC is growing from strength to strength, reaching a million members in the year of its centenary.

These events have an impact on the shifting power relations in the world. They impact on party to party relations and indeed on government to government relations. The crises of capitalism have great lessons for us and our international outlook must be shaped by these events and how they unfold and how our policy positions could influence the creation of a better Africa and a better world.

The initiatives by the BRICS countries must be encouraged as it serves as a strategic platform for the developing world and South to South Co-Operation, in particular, moves to create a development Bank for developing countries.

We are 18 years into our democracy, two years left to celebrating twenty years of our liberation. This period normally brings into decline the growth and cohesion of many liberation movements. We are not immune to this reality, hence the need to ensure the cohesion and unity of our movement at all times.

The African National Congress has a responsibility to build a better Africa and a better world. What does it mean for us?

We are the oldest liberation movement on the continent and we carry the hope and aspirations of the entire continent. It imposes a responsibility of leadership on the ANC.

It is therefore befitting comrades, that we must support South Africa and SADC stance that the candidate in the name of comrade Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma must be supported to lead the AU as chairperson. We need to accept the historic responsibility to lead.

We are reminded of the words of President Dr A.B. Xuma during his Presidential address on the 14 of December 1941



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**“In the founding of the African National Congress in 1912, African leaders of that day displayed a great vision and laid a broad and deep foundation upon which to build the superstructure for African freedom and liberty in the land of their forefathers. They proclaimed through the organisation they set up and the efforts they made, that, only through unity and concerted action of all leaders from our various races and classes may we hope to achieve our freedom and obtain justice and fair play in South Africa. They made sacrifices and suffered privations in the cause of African freedom. Some went to goal and became unpopular with power and influence but remained loyal and true to the cause of their people. Thus they were the architects of our salvation. Thus they pointed the way to us. They showed that freedom is precious and a heavy price must be paid to obtain it.”**

In celebrating the life of Dr A.B.Xuma we must heed his call and **“ remain loyal and true to the cause of our people”**. We must remember that **“Freedom is precious”**

We have come far as a Province since the Moshaweng Provincial conference. The theme of that conference was instructive **“ Advance and Consolidate Organisational Unity as we march towards the centenary of the ANC in 2012”**

We carried out that task consistently as we began to build unity within our structures. A painful but necessary task that involved all members of our collective. The 6<sup>th</sup> Provincial Conference declared that **“ we should never allow the ANC to die in our hands, we need to preserve and defend this glorious movement.”**

We undertook this task with the seriousness it deserves and it became the rallying cry of our entire collective.

The Moshaweng conference gave us three key tasks:

- Build Unity and Cohesion
- Build our structures
- Improve the quality of life for all our people

We can confidently declare today, that we have a united Provincial executive committee that is focused on its work, and leads and guides the lower structures of the movement.

- We took all our regions to their regional conferences, and ensured that we emerge with leadership collectives that take the work of the ANC serious.
- We worked together with our NEC deployees and improved their work in the regions and not only in PEC meetings
- We managed the defection of a number of comrades who left our movement to form a new party
- We acted on a common platform as the Alliance
- We had regular interactions with our Allies and continue to do so, thereby reducing public spats

- We fought a difficult National/Provincial elections and ensured an election victory for the ANC
- We managed the election of the Premier and the establishment of the Provincial government
- We set up the leadership of the Legislature and the NCOP
- We fought a difficult local election and managed to secure another victory for the ANC
- We secured 50% seats for women as Mayors and Speakers in all our municipalities and 20% for youth representation.
- We inducted all our councillors following the May 18,2011 elections on our expectations as a movement
- We improved the working relationship between the Provincial government and the ANC. We said one head is good, two heads are better, the evidence is there for all to see
- We reinforced the centrality of the movement in directing the work of all comrades in their areas of deployment.

**Abanomona abangen'ezulwini, we are indeed making steady progress.**

Dear delegates, allow me to thank President Zuma for enabling us to achieve these goals.

**Firstly, we could rely on his support during the elections; he was a frequent visitor to our Province**

**Secondly, the appointment of Premiers was done through consultations with Provincial chairpersons**

**Thirdly, for the first time in the History of the Northern Cape, we were given two strategic ministerial appointments, in Agriculture and Energy. We were again privileged to receive a deputy minister portfolio in Mineral Resources. We are chairing the Portfolio Committees on International Relations and Co-Operations and Social Development, respectively. We also serve on the National Working Committee of the ANC.**

This is a celebration indeed, Siyabonga Mongameli, ungadinwa.

There is the small matter of diplomatic postings, but siyathemba uvile Mongameli; we do not want to push our luck.

We are raising these matters comrades because we sometimes tend to forget that these positions we occupy, belong to the African National Congress. We are given these privileges only because we belong to the family of the African National Congress. We must resist the temptation to think, the ANC owes us, we owe the ANC, we owe the people of our country. We must use these and other position as an instrument in the hands of the government to improve the quality of life for all our people.

We should again draw wisdom from Dr A.B. Xuma in the same Presidential address of the 14 December 1941 when he says:



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“ You and I are inheritors of these great traditions. We are debtors to their fine examples. We we are called upon to copy their fine example of sacrifice. We are urged not to only build upon the foundation they layed but also to improve and modernise the plan of their structure. To do this it requires the best African brains, and I believe we have them at this conference. It calls for the greatest effort and sacrifice from every man and woman of our race. It means for all of us wherever we are and whoever we are, to do our duty. Congress claims us. Congress demands our best service for our people.”

These words are as true today as they were 71 years ago` **“Congress claims us. Congress demands our best service for our people”**.

The ANC remains the leading political force in our province; we occupy the majority seats in all municipalities bar three, which we lost to opposition coalitions. We control the Provincial Legislature.

The Opposition has formed a coalition which is made up of the DA, COPE, and the ID, which is fast losing its identity.

Some of the local media have also being playing the role of the opposition and assumed a very negative hostile reporting of local events and news. A worrying tendency that places them in the fold of the opposition.

We have seen worrying times when key programmes of the government are completely ignored and key pronouncements are simply diluted by the prominent coverage given to the opposition.

Even internal party matters, like the NGC`s registration fees, the opposition has to comment on, a practice clearly aimed at weakening our movement.

We must not fear to engage on these matters, particularly when the movement is under attack by forces that want to delegitimise our struggle. We cannot leave any attack unchallenged. The task of revolution is a serious task, no place for part timers, amavelatshona, no place for cowards, amagwala.

When Dr Xuma signed what was called the Drs Pact, some conservative members of the ANC complained and said the Indians were “shrewd” and might dominate the ANC. Dr Xuma responded

**“ If you cannot meet the next man on an equal footing without fearing him, there is something wrong with you. You are accepting a position of inferiority to him”**. We are not inferior to any opposition party, we must tackle them and their think tanks head on without fear.**Niyabesaba na? Hayi asibesabi siyabafuna!**

We, however remain the strongest political force in the Province. The growth in our membership and the stability in our regions and Province have greatly enhanced our standing.

We managed the recent incident when our Premier fell ill at the state of the Province address.

We managed it with sensitivity and maturity and enabled the smooth running of the Provincial Government. We are a caring organisation and we must continue to show our caring side. Ernesto Che Guevara in a letter to his daughters written in 1965 said the following:

**“ Your father has been a man who acted on his beliefs and has certainly been loyal to his convictions. Grow up as good revolutionaries. Study hard so that you can master technology, which allows us to master nature. Remember that the Revolution is what is important, and each one of us, alone, is worth nothing. Above all, always be capable of feeling deeply any injustice committed against anyone, anywhere in the world. This is the most beautiful quality in a revolutionary.**

We must all pray for the speedy recovery of comrade Hazel Jenkins and continue to give comrade Grizelda Cjiekella our support in standing in for comrade Hazel. **Igama lamakhosikazi malibongwe!** These are the fruits of a united collective. Unity can enable us to weather any storm be it political or organisational.

Amilcar Cabral in an address to the first Tricontinental Conference of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, held in Havana in January 1966 said **“ When the African people say in their simple language that `no matter how hot the water from your well, it will not cook your rice,` they express with singular simplicity a fundamental principle, not only of physics, but also of political science. We know that the development of a phenomenon in a movement, whatever its external appearance, depends mainly on its internal characteristics. We also know that on the political level our own reality- however fine and attractive the reality of others may be- can only be transformed by detailed knowledge of it, by our own efforts, by our own sacrifices.”**

The unity of our movement, its cohesion and its organisational mobility can only be achieved and sustained by **“ our own efforts and our own sacrifices.”** We are our own enemy and yet we possess within ourselves, the best of skills, talents and ability to place the unity of our movement as the core reason for our future. This must be achieved not by looking or following the reality of others but by **“our own efforts, by our own sacrifices”**.

We must not forget one of the keys task given to us by the 6<sup>th</sup> Provincial Conference was to **“improve the quality of life of all our people”**. The main reason we are a ruling party in this country and in the Province. How do we use the tool of government to bring about this improvement in the quality of life of our people?

We welcome the announcement that South Africa will host the larger volume of the SKA project in our Province, in the region of Pixley ka Seme, in the town of Carnavon. This development will make a huge impact on the town, the region and the Province. It will put our province at the cutting edge of scientific study and design and research into matters of the universe and astronomy.

The Southern African Large Telescope [SALT] and the Bloodhound Supersonic land speed record are all attempts to encourage our youth and promote scientific innovation and interest in science, maths, engineering and technology.





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The announcement of a University for the Northern Cape will enable us to benefit from an institution that will provide our young people with a firm foundation for knowledge and education.

We must approach the issue of location with the same sensitivity and maturity as we have done on other important matters. The whole Province must benefit and all regions must tap into the educational, research and economic spin offs such a university can bring to our Province.

We welcome the Infrastructure Investment that will unlock further economic growth in the country but particularly the Strategic Infrastructure Project [SIP5] which will increase rail capacity on the Sishen Saldanha line and open up more opportunities for beneficiation and industrialisation in the John Taolo Gaetsewe region.

The opportunities in the Green economy will make it possible for our Province to create more jobs and green infrastructure for all our people. The Green Economy Accord that was recently signed by government and its social partners sets ambitious targets for local procurement in the manufacturing and assembly, construction and installation of renewable energy plants and equipment in our province and throughout the country.

The legacy of mining has to be considered given the history of mining, particularly diamond mining in the province. **What is it that we can confidently show to our people that is a legacy of diamond mining in the Province?**

We are convinced comrade President, that the decision to relocate the State Diamond Trader to Kimberley was a correct decision. Our failure to implement that decision will not leave a better legacy for diamond beneficiation in this Province. The fortunate part of this decision, it is a government decision, we rely on you comrade President, just as in your earlier decisions, to once more make us proud. The State Diamond Trader belongs in the Diamond Province, where the Industry left us with nothing, our government can make a fundamental difference.

We are continuing to pursue the creation of a rail hub in the Pixley ka Seme region and giving attention to the water challenges in that region. The upington Solar Park is one flagship initiative that links with the De Aar via the Eskom grid along the N10 creating what we call the N10 Solar Corridor.

Pixley ka Seme district has been identified as a potential renewable energy Special Economic Zone. The role of rail infrastructure is critical in implementing further developments.

Work is underway to recapitalise the FET College in Namakwa to ensure that we build a core of technical capacities for the region and the province. The search for alternative economic drivers apart from mining will help us to further develop this region. The Key areas are in wind energy, aqua and mariculture.

The Solar Park in Siyanda does provide us with an opportunity to position the Province as a solar hub. The manufacturing related activities of these solar and wind energy models must be intensely explored.

Our unemployment rate has improved from 31.4% in the first quarter of 2011 to 24.9 in the first quarter of 2012. We currently employ 25,000 more people than the same period last year. The 25,000 are an indication that we are on track and have exceeded the target of creating 16,000 jobs for the previous year as set out in the reviewed PGDS.

We are pleased to announce that our finances are improving. We have reduced our overdraft substantially to free more money for the challenges in Health and Education. In May 2009, after we took office our overdraft was a staggering R357, 756 Million, in the first three years we reduced it to R135, 862 Million at the end of the 2009/2010 financial year. As at March 2011 we further reduced it to R85, 896 Million. We are proud to report that by the end of the financial year we turned around the bank overdraft to a positive and healthy bank balance of R90, 461 Million.

Comrade delegates, these are the fruits of unity and a working relationship between the ANC and its government. We listened very carefully to Amilcar Cabral when he said:

**“ Always bear in mind that people do not fight for ideas, for the things in anyone`s head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children”.**

These wise words must continue to remind us that our role in government is to ensure that our people live better, the future of their children is secured and that they prosper under conditions of peace.

In celebrating youth month, we must be alert to the army of young people that continue to strive for better skills and employment. We must do more to arrest the scourge of unemployment and skills shortages amongst our youth.

The picture of protest marches that are led by youth must spur us onto greater action. Some of these protest are genuine, some are a manifestation of the slow pace of governance, some as a result of poor communication, still any grievance, any pain, and any anger from our people must receive a comprehensive response from our government.

Amilcar Cabral in a discussion with undergraduate students responded to this behaviour by saying:

**“ It is the social environment and the problems arising from the reaction to this environment and the reactions of the human beings in question. All this defines the behaviour of the human aggregate”.**

We wish to urge our municipalities to respond to the cries of our people and improve their living condition to avoid a pattern of hot spots emerging in our cities and towns.

**Congress demands our best service for our people.**

We have a number of challenges that we need to confront to make the ANC an even stronger movement



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- Intensify our political education programme within our structures
- Reinforce our decision on managing people that left the ANC to Cope and who are now returning to the ANC
- Confront the leading role some of these ``returnees'' are playing by leading factions in our structures
- The challenges of under spending by Provincial departments and municipalities on Infrastructure
- The need to make Operation clean audit 2014 a political programme of the ANC led Alliance
- The need to continue to further improve the relations within and amongst Alliance partners
- Improve on the mobilisation and organising of workers day events in the Province, in particular, but other national days as well
- The relationship between the Youth League and the YCL
- The absence of community campaigns within our branches
- The slow responses by our structures to genuine community grievances
- The failure to manage internal dynamics that tend to impact on governance, particularly in Municipalities.
- The failure of our ANC ward councillors to convene monthly community meetings as reflected in the Manifesto
- The role played by senior managers in our administration, many beneficiaries of our movement, but traitors in the implementation of policies, some even sell out during elections by not voting and others do not even register in the wards they reside in.
- The disease of gossip, lies and name dropping has to be cured rather soonest. This creates the seed of mistrust, division and uncertainty.
- The personalisation of political issues creates a disjuncture in policy and political debates
- We must reaffirm the right of comrades to contest and not label them as enemies, it is their right to be members of the movement, and it is your right to give or deny them the privilege to lead.
- We need to manage the misinterpretation of the concept of Deployment, if not properly managed it can in the words of **President Mandela` endanger the revolution`**

Comrade delegates, allow me to thank the President for honouring us with his presence here today. We said during the 98<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in Kimberley, **‘that the Northern Cape will never be the same again`** indeed we have been changing slowly but surely, with your continued support we can always do more.

We must express our gratitude to the NEC deployees led by comrade Duma Ndleleni, thank you for your support in assisting this collective to do its work.

The outgoing PEC, it was a real privilege and an honour to lead such a collective. You were very determined and focused on the directives from Polokwane and Moshaweng.



We led this Province with dignity and we are handing over a united functional organisation.

Thank you for placing the movement first. You will remain leaders of our organisation.

The officials of the ANC thank you for leading and not shying away from the burden of leadership. We had a bigger responsibility and we carried it, as individuals but more as a collective.

The regional chairs and secretaries, thank you for supporting this collective and helping us to fulfil our oversight role in your regions.

Comrade delegates, you have shown discipline and maturity in allowing us to lead you; we trust that you will show the same maturity and discipline in electing the new leadership. The future of the movement is in your hands.

It is appropriate that we must close with the words of Amilcar Cabral because we learn from others and we must teach others.

**Each one teach one.**

Cabral shared these words with us so that we too can spread them to others.

**“Responsible members must take life seriously, conscious of their responsibilities, thoughtful about carrying them out, and with a comradeship, based on work and duty done...Nothing of this is incompatible with the joy of living, or with love for life and its amusements, or with confidence in the future and in our work.**

**We must practice revolutionary democracy in every aspect of our Party life. Every responsible member must have the courage of his responsibilities, exacting from other a proper respect for his work and properly respecting the work of other.**

**Hide nothing from the masses of our people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories!**

**We wish you all the best with the work of the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Conference.**

Amandla Ngawethu!

All Power to the People!

Matla ke a rona!



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