

STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE  
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE OCCASION OF  
JANUARY 8, 1984, DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT, O.R. TAMBO

Dear Compatriots

Brothers and Sisters in Struggle

Comrades,

Today, the 8th of January, your organisation, the African National Congress is 72 years old. In keeping with established practice, we ask you to share with us today some thoughts on the tasks that confront us during 1984. Allow me to begin by extending to you all, the wishes of the National Executive Committee and the general leadership of the ANC for great successes in the New Year.

This time last year, when we marked the 71st Anniversary of the founding of our Organisation, we pointed out that our long struggle had come to point where the revolutionary ferment had reached unprecedented heights and had plunged the ruling racist clique into deeper and deeper levels of crisis. We went on to state that within the confines of the apartheid system there was no way out of this crisis situation. Apartheid cannot be reformed. The only real solution lies in the victory of the revolutionary forces, the dismantling of the apartheid machinery and the transfer of political and economic power to the democratic majority.

Events of the past year have fully borne out the correctness of this assessment. The momentous struggles of the past year have taken us further upon the road to our cherished goal and have driven the racist rulers into further acts of desperation. For us, the future is brightening daily whilst for the Pretoria racist clique, the future is getting darker each passing day.

We commend you on the sacrifices and dedication by which during 1983 you took our country significantly forward towards liberation. The past year, can have left our enemies in no doubt that we have the determination to struggle, the ability to organise for victory and the will to take power into our hands. The only question that confronts us all, singly and collectively, is how we should respond to the Order of the Day -- mobilise and march forward to people's power!

Our revolutionary struggle rests on four pillars. These are first, the all-round vanguard activity of the ~~underground~~ structures of the ANC, second, the united mass action of the peoples, third, our armed offensive spearheaded by Umkhonto we Sizwe and fourth, the international drive to isolate the apartheid regime and win world-wide moral, political and material support for the struggle.

Dear Comrades and Friends,

Over the last few years, the guardians of reaction in our country have devised a programme of action centred on the twin notions of so-called national security and total strategy. This programme is based on the recognition that the apartheid system is immersed in a deep and permanent general crisis. The ruling group in Pretoria has therefore been addressing itself to the question of how to manage this crisis to ensure that it does not get out of hand.

The Bantustan Scheme, the militarisation of society; the offensive against the ANC; the new apartheid constitution and other recent pieces of legislation notably those covering industrial relations, the so-called community councils, the press and the economy, all are elements in this programme of crisis management. Coupled with the criminal war against the Namibian and Angolan people and increased aggression against the rest of Southern Africa, these measures point to the desperation of the regime as it battles for its survival.

The racists have decided, under mounting pressure from the revolutionary masses and the international community, to tinker with the Apartheid System, but in such a way as to further entrench racism and consolidate this illegitimate and criminal system. Despite all these manouvres, Apartheid has no future.

In other words, the fascists recognise that they can no longer rule in the old way. We recall how, at the height of the SOWETO uprising, J.B. Voster made bold to declare: "there is no crisis" -- no crisis for minority rule. But a few years later P.W. Botha called on the whites to adapt to reality or perish with Apartheid.

This was a public admission that there is a crisis, threatening the destruction of the apartheid system. It is an imperative task of the revolutionary and democratic forces of our country to compound and further deepen this crisis by ever intensifying the struggle for national and social emancipation.

### Compatriots,

The black people of our country have challenged the legitimacy of the South African racist State from its formation in 1910 and throughout the ensuing decades. As we fight the Apartheid system today, we should all speak with one voice in declaring that the present regime, like all others before it, has no legitimate authority to rule our country. Indeed, its central purpose is to perpetuate the illegal rule of the white usurpers of power in our country.

All revolutions are about state power. Ours is no exception. The slogan, - "Power to the People", means one thing and one thing only. It means we seek to destroy the power of apartheid tyranny and replace it with popular power, with a government whose authority derives from the will of all our people, both black and white.

The issue we have to settle together is what steps to take to attain that ultimate goal? What intermediate objectives should we set ourselves, building on what we have achieved, and in preparation for the next stage in our forward march to victory? The answer to these questions relates directly to what we have already referred to as the illegality of the apartheid state.

We must begin to use our accumulated strength to destroy the organs of government of the apartheid regime. We have to undermine and weaken its control over us, exactly by frustrating its attempts to control us. We should direct our collective might to rendering the enemy's instruments of authority unworkable. To march forward must mean that we advance against the regime's organs of state-power, creating conditions in which the country becomes increasingly ungovernable.

Comrades, countrymen and friends:

You are aware that the apartheid regime maintains an extensive administrative system through which it directs our lives. This system includes organ of central and provincial government, the army and the police, the judiciary, the Bantustans administration, the community councils, the local management and local affairs committee. It is these institutions of apartheid power that we must attack and demolish, as apart of the struggle to put an end to racist minority rule in our country. Needless to say, as strategists, we must select for attack those parts of the enemy administrative system which we have the power to destroy as a result of our united and determined offensive. We must hit the enemy where it is weakest.

The goal we are setting ourselves today is dictated by the logic of our revolution. Its realisation is ~~not~~ possible by the fact that in our millions, we have already laid the basis for its accomplishment. Thus through our efforts, the so-called Coloured Persons Representative Council ceased to exist; as a result of extensive mobilisation, the puppet South African Indian Council was brought in by a laughably insignificant minority; the entire Bantustan system faces overwhelming rejection and continuous resistance, and similarly, towards the end of 1983, we united in a massive rejection of the local management committees and community councils.

In certain areas and at different times, we have gone beyond rejection of this oppressive system of government, beyond a challenge to its legitimacy. In 1960 our people in Pondoland destroyed the regime's administration, and set up their own administration and people's courts. Likewise in 1976, we caused the collapse of the Urban Bantu Councils. In the recent past, in Sobantu Village in Pietermaritzburg, we destroyed the newly installed community council and frustrated the plans of the Drakensburg Administration Board.

Our determined resistance at Crossroads and at KTC in the Western Cape has made it impossible for Koornhof to carry out his schemes. He has been unable to govern at will. In Mdantsane our heroic struggle has shaken the puppet Sebe Administration to its core. Commenting on this situation, one South African political observer stated: "the stakes are high because the issues have moved beyond those of a (bus) fare increase. The boycott has become a conflict of will between the Ciskei (puppet administration) and its many opponents in Mdantsane, the second largest black township in South Africa."

In the course of our struggles against rent increases and other facets of apartheid, such as the proposed incorporation of some townships into the KwaZulu bantustan, we have gone further to destroy part of the administrative infrastructure of the Pretoria regime.

From these examples, it is clear that we have the ability to raise the struggle to greater heights. Having rejected the community councils by boycotting the elections, we should not allow them to be imposed on us. We do not want them. We must ensure that they cease to exist. Where administration boards take over their functions, then these must be destroyed too.

In the Ciskei, as with the other so-called independent Bantustans, we must take the battle further. In the conflict of will between ourselves and the murderous Sebe regime, our will must prevail. And it will if we transform what began in Mdantsane as resistance to bus-fare increases into a nationwide offensive against the Pretoria regime's Bantustan system. In Mdantsane the people have said - "Sebe must go! Power to the People!" That call should spread throughout the Ciskei to galvanise the people into united action for the destruction of the instrument of oppression - the Ciskei Bantustan.

The intolerable hardships and sufferings; the persecutions, detentions and murders of patriots and democrats in other Bantustans call for the establishment of fighting organisations to organise and lead the struggle for the destruction of these racist institutions of oppression".

This year, Botha and Malan will be busy implementing the provisions of their apartheid constitution. In this regard, our democratic movement must be mobilised to ensure that the so-called Coloured and Indian sections of the black population refuse to be recruited to play the role of partners in apartheid tyranny. White South Africa alone should man the apartheid constitutional posts which it alone has created, for its exclusive benefit. Those who elect to serve in the apartheid institutions must expect to face the wrath of the people.

We must go further to say that our white compatriots, with even a modicum of anti-apartheid feeling, have to abandon the delusion that they can use Botha's constitutional institutions to bring about any change. The forces struggling for a new order in our country are outside of these structures. It is within the ranks of these extra parliamentary forces that the anti-apartheid whites can make a significant contribution to democratic change in our country. Now is the time to choose.

It is essential that we continue to shift our posture from the defensive to the offensive. The enemy has failed to destroy us and never will. But invincibility is not enough. It is in the attack that we shall find victory. Nor should we wait for the enemy to take the initiative and then react to its plans and schemes. We have a purpose, a goal, an objective, a historic mission to accomplish for our country and for humanity. Our historic duty is to pursue it with relentless determination and persistence, whatever the enemy does or omits to do.

We must apply ourselves with more vigour in our efforts to organise the unorganised, to consolidate, defend and expand existing people's organisations.

and engage the racist enemy in united action on all fronts. It is absolutely necessary to raise the standard of our organisational and educational work as well as psychological preparedness, to the level of the major and complex tasks facing our revolution today.

At this juncture allow me to single out the creation of the U.D.F. as a historic achievement in our people's efforts to unite in the broadest possible front for the struggle against the inhuman apartheid system. The formation of the United Democratic Front was a product of our people's determination to be their own liberators.

The growth of the strength of the democratic trade union movement and its power to wrest recognition from both the regime and the employers, and the determined efforts to form one national trade federation constitute one of the most significant advances of our struggle in recent years.

Everywhere in the country, our people and youth have courageously confronted the regime in numerous encounters, whether against rent-increases, forced removals or in military actions, among them the attack on the Air Force Headquarters at Pretoria by Umkhonto we Sizwe.

This is the spirit that must guide and inspire the leaders, organisers and activists of our democratic movement. We are talking of a spirit of rebellion and frame of mind which puts to the fore the politics of revolutionary change.

A special responsibility rests on the shoulders of the ANC and the most advanced members of our broad democratic movement to act as revolutionaries, - as such, to wage revolutionary struggle; and, basing themselves on the conscious and organised involvement of the masses of the people, to build a strong and disciplined revolutionary movement. In this context, the further mobilisation and organisation of the masses of our country assumes special importance.

Quite clearly, we have made great strides in these areas of work. This is evident in the strength of the UDF and the pace at which it continues to grow. It is evident also from the struggles we have conducted, in some areas for months on end. We can see it in the organisational growth of the trade union movement. There have been commendable advances in the development of the youth and students' as well as civic and women's movements.

We have built an organised mass democratic movement sufficiently strong to give us the possibility to tackle other uncompleted organisational tasks.

We refer here in particular to the organisation of the working class into a revolutionary trade union movement; the organisation of the rural masses, inside and outside the Bantustans; the organisation of the women-folk of our country and the religious community into struggle.

Let us now take a brief look at each of these areas of work:

Millions of workers in our country, including the unemployed and those engaged in the agricultural sector, remain unorganised. We have to make determined efforts to reach these unorganised workers, bearing in mind that it is the historic responsibility of the working class to take the lead in our struggle for people's power.

The task of forming one federation to unite the democratic trade union movement has not yet been accomplished. We should pursue this goal with even more determination and speed because, apart from anything else, a united democratic workers' movement would give us greater possibilities to advance our struggle.

We do not believe, dear comrades, that there are insurmountable or even very serious obstacles on the way to the creation of such a federation. We do not agree with the school of thought which creates artificial barriers between the fight for trade union rights and the national liberation struggle under the racial conditions obtaining in South Africa. In our situation, the victory of the trade union struggle is unattainable except as an integral part of the victory of the political, ideological and military struggle. The struggle of the working class is, therefore, and must be, an integral part of the national liberation struggle.

The organisation and mobilisation of the rural population is clearly lagging behind those of our people in the towns and cities. And yet it is in these rural areas that the apartheid system has its most disastrous impact on our people. We have the organisational capacity to begin to tackle the rural area seriously and continuously.

In the Freedom Charter we say that "the land shall be shared among those who work it". As you will know, the situation today is that our people in the bantustans have been reduced to landless and jobless outcasts.

stans have been reduced to landless and jobless outcasts. Many are condemned to slow and painful death in the so-called resettlement camps. On the commercial farms, the most merciless brutalisation of our people, especially women and children, takes place, every day and every hour of the day at the hands of the landowners.

One of the fundamental elements for the solution of the problems facing our people in the countryside is the resolution of the land question in favour of the tillers. Our immediate task therefore, is to mobilise the rural masses around the question of land. It is only when the countryside is organised that the rural masses will be able to respond resolutely to the call: "seize the land!"

Brothers and Sisters,  
Fellow-countrymen,

In the past period we have seen the increased involvement of the religious community in our struggle for liberation. In this context, you are aware that at the South African Council of Churches National Conference last year, a proposal was made to convene a conference in 1986 to decide on the issue of the contribution of the Christian church to change in our country. It was then said: "When peace is broken or threatened by injustice, the Christian had a responsibility to work for peace to work for righteousness, by striving to rectify what is unrighteous, unjust".

Those words constitute a serious challenge not only to Christians, but also to people of other faiths in our country. While the evil and unjust apartheid system exists in our country, we cannot have peace, now can the peoples of Southern Africa.

The fraternal peoples of Namibia and Angola, especially, have for years now known no peace because of Pretoria's brutal colonisation and occupation of their countries. Daily, our Namibian and Angolan brothers and sisters suffer death and destruction from the regime's bombs, bullets and bayonets. This war of aggression is being conducted by a regime from our own country and we have a responsibility to ourselves and the children and people of Namibia and Angola, to raise our voices in condemnation of the aggression. We urge upon the people of South Africa to demand and fight for the immediate withdrawal of all South African troops, mercenaries, Pretoria-backed bandits and special assassination groups from Angola, Namibia and other affected countries of Southern Africa. In this context, let the oppressed democrats of our country assume their historic responsibility, recognising that the struggle in South Africa is the hope of the sub-continent.



We are entitled to expect that people of all faiths in our country, including the Christian, the Jew, the Hindu and the Moslem, will in fact act and act now, in defence of justice, peace and life; against a system that is totally evil and inhuman.

It will be our special task this year to organise and mobilise our womenfolk into a powerful, united and active force for revolutionary change. This task falls on men and women alike - all of us together as comrades in struggle. We wish to stress the need, at the present hour, for the emergence on the political scene of a women's movement that is politically and organisationally united. Our struggle needs and demands this potentially mighty force.

Our struggle would be less than powerful and our national and social emancipation could never be complete if we continue to treat the women of our country as dependent minors and objects of one form of exploitation or another. Certainly no longer should it be that woman's place is in the kitchen. In our beleaguered country, the woman's place is in the battlefield of struggle.

We have come a long way from the time, as in the 50's, when we fought bare-handed - disarmed and unarmed - against the military might and the trigger happy army and police force of the apartheid regime. No black hand was allowed to touch a fire-arm or possess any instrument more lethal than a pen knife.

Today, the racist regime's army and police generals who occupy a central position in Pretoria's state machinery, through the State Security Council are making frantic efforts to recruit and arm the "Kaffirs, Coolies and Hotnots" of the 50's to serve as cannon fodder in the defence of a system that has fallen foul of the times, a system that has enslaved and debased us these past 70 years.

It is not that the military might of the regime has declined. It is rather that the people, determined to be free, have taken up arms and, through their own army Umkhonto We Sizwe, have moved on to the offensive.

Today, armed struggle is a vital, indispensable component of the struggle for national and social liberation in South Africa, where the apartheid regime relies for survival on its fascist army and police, on black mercenaries, and on puppet armies and murderous puppet administrations who slaughter men as readily they butcher children, the democratic majority in our country supports the People's

Army - Umkhonto We Sizwe, whose rising sophistication will h yet compound the survival problems of the apartheid system.

But the challenge confronting Umkhonto We Sizwe in face of current developments in Southern Africa has never been greater. Therefore, in commending its units and commanders on the sustained offensive of the past year, we charge them, and call upon our people to carry the struggle to new heights, and sue for victory tomorrow rather than the day after tomorrow.

To this end, Z Umkhonto We Sizwe must deepen its roots and grow inextricably among the popular masses : among us - the workers, the peasants, the youth, the women; we, the unemployed, the landless, the homeless, and the starving millions.

Umkhonto We Sizwe must grow in size, in the spread and quality of its operations and in the weight of every blow delivered. kThe armed struggle must grow. We shall achieve victory through a combination of mass political action and organized revolutionary violence.

We address a special message to the white youth. Your future is in issue. The apartheid regime has no future. Like Adolph Hitler and his war machine, after spreading death and destroyed everywhere.

The future belongs to the majority of the people of South Africa, black and white, who, in struggle, are today laying the foundations of a united, non-racial democratic South Africa in what will then, but only then, become a peaceful and rapidly advancing region of Africa.

Your proper place is among these builders of a new order in our country. Join them. Refuse to join an army whose sole function is to murder, murder, murder African people everywhere.

It goes without saying that Black youth - African, Indian and so-called Coloured must under no circumstances serve in Pretoria's army fo violent movements. should immediately take up this issue with our youth throughout the country.

Our democratic movement, our movement for national liberation is part of a multi-million strong world alliance of forces which fights for national independence, democracy, social progress and peace. On the other hand, the apartheid

regime belongs firmly within the camp of imperialist reaction and is active within this camp to further counter-revolutionary goals.

We therefore have an international obligation to be active in the struggle to defeat the counter-offensive that the imperialists, led by the Reagan Administration of the United States, have launched. We too must raise our voice against the war-mongers within NATO who have brought humanity closer to a nuclear holocaust by sabotaging all efforts at achieving nuclear disarmament and who have, instead, unleashed a new arms race and heightened international tension and insecurity. We too must struggle together with the world peace forces especially because the Pretoria regime itself possesses nuclear weapons and maintains secret military relations with the most belligerent circles on the world scene.

We too must speak out and have spoken out against the attempts of the United States to impose its will on the peoples of the world. This policy has already resulted in the criminal invasion of Grenada, the undeclared war against Nicaragua and the direct intervention of the United States in El Salvador, in support of a gang of murderers. It has led to a reign of terror against the people of Palestine and their organisation, the PLO, as well as the people of Lebanon. It has helped Morocco to ignore the resolutions of the OAU and to maintain its colonial hold over the people of Western Sahara. This policy has further delayed the independence of Namibia and emboldened the Pretoria regime itself to seek to impose its will on the peoples of Southern Africa by force of arms.

In this regard, through a policy of military terror and economic strangulation, the racists seek to compel the independent states of our region to surrender their independence and, as an important part of that surrender, to help evict the ANC from the whole of Southern Africa. Never was there a clearer illustration of the relationship between the struggle to liberate our country and the struggle to defend the independence and sovereignty of the countries of Southern Africa. The peoples of our region share one common destiny. Certainly, that can never be a destiny of subserviency to the criminal regime of Pretoria.

As the Maputo Frontline States Summit of March 1982 agreed, the only way forward for the peoples of our region is to support the ANC and SWAPO in our common struggle against the Pretoria regime and to repulse the offensive of the regime against independent Africa.

For some time now, especially since the Maseru massacre, spokesmen of the South African regime have repeatedly boasted of the intimate nature of their collaboration and the happy relations they have with the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland. The people of Swaziland, like most in the rest of Africa, will have resented that claim, especially if, as we suspect, Pretoria has in mind collaboration in the fruitless attempt to liquidate the ANC by assassinating and harassing its members and supporters in Swaziland.

The trouble about any alliance with apartheid is that the liberation struggle is growing and destined to grow and advance, no matter which or how members and leaders of the liberation movement are murdered or arrested in the doubtful interests of either white minority domination or good neighbourliness.

Of course the Botha regime is frantic about the emergence of the ANC as the alternative power on the South African political scene. The regime is frantic also because of its inability to block the powerful and evidently dangerous thrust of the ANC and the people towards the goal of liberation. The regime is therefore blackmailing African States into an alliance targetted on the destruction of the ANC.

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The indestructibility of the ANC should however not induce complacency on our part. In order for the ANC to effectively pursue and accomplish its historic mission, we must be unceasing in our efforts to strengthen and expand its underground structures, ensuring its active presence everywhere in our country.

We hereby extend our unequivocal support to the independent states of Southern Africa, including Seychelles, in the common struggle to defeat the aggressive

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policies of the Botha regime. The training, arming and deployment of counter-revolutionary bandits into Namibia, Lesotho and Zimbabwe forms part of this aggression. We are greatly inspired by the heroic struggle of the people of Angola to expel the occupying South African forces from their country and to wipe out the puppet UNITA bandits. We salute the internationalist Cuban forces which have contributed so decisively to frustrate the schemes of the Pretoria regime and its ally, the Reagan Administration.

We extend our greetings to our comrades in arms: SWAPO, the Peoples Liberation Army of Namibia and the Namibian people as a whole and pledge to fight side by side with them until our continent is rid of all vestiges of colonial and white minority domination.

As we enter this New Year - we hail the firm and positive role played by the frontline countries and the forward country of Lesotho, despite Pretoria's destabilisation efforts and naked aggression against them. The dream of the total liberation of Africa is in sight.

We salute the resilience of the OAU in the face of concerted imperialist manoeuvres and call upon both the OAU and the non-aligned countries to increase their material and moral support for our struggle as well as that of SWAPO and the frontline countries.

The Socialist countries remain a solid pillar of support to our national liberation struggle. We are assured of their continued internationalist solidarity till the triumph of our revolutionary struggle.

In the past year we have succeeded in widening and deepening our support in the western countries. We are particularly signisant of the consistent support we receive from Sweden and other Nordic countries, from Holland, Italy and Austria to mention a few. We are happy to report the establishment of a new office in Australia, at the supportive invitation of the Government and people of that friendly country.

Our efforts to win international support have been significantly sustained by a wide spectrum of anti-apartheid solidarity and amass organisations in almost all the western countries as well as the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. With respect to the latter continent, the occasion of the ceremony of the award of the Simon Boliva medal of Honour to our people's hero, Nelson Mandela, served the great purpose of laying a firm foundation for the future development of our relations with the peoples of Panama, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and other South and Central American countries.

We pay tribute to the progressive forces in the USA for their valiant efforts to achieve wide-scale U.S. for

We pay tribute to the progressive forces in the USA for their valiant efforts to achieve wide-scale U.S. disinvestment in South Africa. On them rests the heavy responsibility to defeat the Reagan Administration's racist "constructive engagement" policy with Pretoria, and to curb and confine the aggressive character of American imperialism.

We salute the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people fighting for their birth-right under the tried and tested leadership of the P.L.O. and commend those Arab countries who are making a positive contribution towards the achievement of genuine and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Dear Compatriots,

On this historic 72nd Anniversary of the ANC, we pay undying tribute to the many patriots who have fallen in action since January 8 last year. Among these we remember, with great affection, especially Comrades Dora Tamana, Yusuf Mota Dadoo, Rev. James Calata - great stalwarts whose contribution to our movement shall be remembered by all future generation. We dip our revolutionary banner in tribute to the heroic combatants of Umkhonto We Sizwe, including Comrades Jerry Mosololi, Simon Mogoerane, and Thabo Motaung. We pay homage to the martyrs of our people like Saul Mkhize and Mzi Dube - all of whom were murdered in cold blood by the Pretoria regime.

We salute all our leaders and activists incarcerated in Pretoria's dungeons, and greet all those who are banned and banished. We greet you all our working people in the mines and factories, in the fields and highways, in offices, churches, schools, and hospitals and the various other socio-cultural services.

We greet parents, mothers and fathers who manage to raise families against tremendous odds in the face of the genocidal apartheid policies. The loss of life resulting from the operation of this system is staggering. The process and victory of our struggle will redeem the situation. In the meantime as a people, we need to address the problem of lack of respect for human life which is manifest in the growing number of deaths from unnatural causes in the ghettos of



to the next stage of our struggle. "The workers and peasants; women, youth and students; all of us black and white must continue to engage in an ever-broader and united assault on the racist regime and its policies".

One of the principal tasks we have to accomplish this year is, as I have said, the organisation and mobilisation of our womenfolk into struggle. For this reason in the name of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress I declare 1984 THE YEAR OF THE WOMEN, and charge the entire democratic and patriotic forces of our country with the task of joining in the effort to mobilise our women to unite in struggle for people's power!

To all true patriots of our country, we extend best wishes for success in our common struggle during this, THE YEAR OF THE WOMEN!

**MOBILISE AND MARCH FORWARD TO PEOPLE'S POWER! !!**

**Amandla ngawethu!**

**Matla ke a rona!**

**Power to the People!**