

Programme of Action

A. Preamble

The second ANC Women's Conference, taking place in Luanda, People's Republic of Angola on the 1 - 6 September 1987, under the theme "For all round mobilisation and greater unity of women towards the Seizure of Power" takes great courage from the achievements scored by the struggling women and people of our country since the historic ANC Women's Conference held in Luanda on September 10 - 14, 1981.

Since the last Conference our country has been characterised by the intensification of people's resistance and the broadening of the democratic movement. The masses of our people have surged forward in a tidal wave that is making the very roots of racist colonial rule in our country shake.

We are daily experiencing the ever growing number of people swelling the ranks of the revolutionary struggle that is unfolding in our country.

In their various formations the people of our country from various social strata have scored great victories against the enemy. The emergence of organisations like the UDFWC, COSATU, MECC, DPSC, RMC, SANSCO, SAYCO, SADWU, FEDSAW, UWCO, MOW, PAWO and many others have been a milestone in the struggle for unity and united action against the racist Pretoria regime.

On the battlefield, our People's Army, Umkhonto Wesizwe, has struck serious blows at the Botha-Malan economic and military machine.

The women of our country have not been found wanting in this revolutionary upsurge. Under very difficult conditions they built more grassroot organisations to mobilise the people against the racist Botha regime in both urban and rural areas. In their pursuit for unity they built regional organisations as they prepare for the launch of a national women's body. Our women remain the Rock of the nation and titans of our revolution.

The apartheid system has been rendered unworkable. In many areas apartheid structures have been destroyed and replaced by organs of people's power. The regime has been driven into an all-round crisis. In response to this situation the regime has intensified its repressive measures to try and crush the people's determination to liberate themselves. Racist troops and police are occupying major black townships and the regime's created "Vigilantes" kitskonstables which are death squads engaged in assassinations of activists in the democratic movement. Since July, 1985 our country has been under a state of emergency aimed at crippling

progressive organisations and limiting the people's capacity and determinations to fight for freedom, with a drive to destroy our infrastructure both inside and outside the country. Based on its strategy of total onslaught the regime has established joint management committees (JMC) to reverse gains scored by the progressive forces. They hope to hoodwink the masses into believing that there is fundamental change in their lot.

This state terror which the regime has unleashed against our people instead of having negative effects has, however, made the people look for more effective ways of organising with unity of the oppressed, their major objective being the total destruction of the apartheid colonial system. In this regard, the mass democratic movement has undergone qualitative changes. We have seen the emergence and growth of national and regional organisations such as those mentioned earlier.

In addition the question of women's emancipation and their involvement in all aspects of the national liberation struggle as a prerequisite is raised very sharply in the women's movement, the trade unions, the youth and in the community organisations. More and more women are becoming involved.

Based on this situation the second national ANC Women's Conference discussed the following aspects:

- i) Internal mobilisation of our women
- ii) The health of our women and children.
- iii) The education of our women and their role as transmitters of our culture.
- iv) The role and place of South African women in the international women's movement.
- v) The structure of our women's section and
- vi) The question of women's emancipation.

B. Conference Resolved that the Women's Section

- Work tirelessly for the exclusive recognition of the ANC as the only leader in the struggle against White domination, national oppression and exploitation.
- Mobilise more women into the ANC and intensify their recruitment into Umkhonto Wesizwe. Pay special attention to rural women for their importance in the people's war.

- Put special emphasis on the deployment of women into combat duties.
- Strengthen political links with patriotic and democratic women's organisations in the common struggle against the racist regime, above all unity is crucial.
- Call on women of South Africa to unite and consolidate all efforts of the democratic women's organisation at local, regional and national level to strive for higher levels of organisation, planning, mobilisation and discipline.
- Increase the women's political understanding of armed struggle through exposure to experience of women in similar circumstances such as Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Algeria, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Cuba etc.
- In consultation with the PMC examine all decisions pertaining to internal work. Women's section to be represented in PMC structures to facilitate internal work.
- Be involved in the debriefing of women cadres at entry points to assist in implementing the programme of action.
- Our propaganda especially in VOW could be more educational in character directed at women in VOW. This propaganda should be informed by and concentrate on the burning issues facing our people at home.
- Appeal to our home at people - White, Indian, Coloured and African mothers - to stop their children, male and female, their brothers, sisters and husbands being coopted into enemy organs of oppression such as the SADF, SAP, Vigilantes, etc.
- Give special attention to mobilizing and organizing white women around issues of forced conscription into the SADF.
- Find ways and means of mobilizing more Indian women.
- Address itself to the organisation of the unemployed whom women are in the majority.
- Strengthen the link between women's organisations and trade unions.
- Link campaigns in urban areas with rural issues and to involve women trade unionists in this work.

- Mobilise intellectual women into the national democratic revolution.
- Conduct seminars and workshops for improving confidence and skills especially for the implementation of projects which women can mobilise around such as basic needs, illiteracy, income generation etc.
- Mobilise agricultural workers around the land issues and grievances surrounding this.
- Encourage women to study natural sciences and technical subjects which they have been denied access to.
- Work out a programme in conjunction with the political education department which will systematically set out to upgrade our women politically.
- Give special attention to the upgrading of women. Discriminate positively in favour of women in education.
- Campaign for the withdrawal of all racist troops and police from schools.
- In conjunction with the Department of Arts and Culture encourage all women artists to speak out seriously, correct the negative portrayal of women.
- Intensify the campaign to "Save the Children of South Africa".
- To mobilise women around issues of the health of their families.
- To increase propaganda regarding health issues.
- To integrate young children in Mazimbu at the boarding into families wherever possible and that they be taken out for excursion and for holidays if possible.
- To urgently train personnel to deal with the special education of children with special needs, e.g. mentally retarded, physically handicapped - blind and deaf.
- To create regional children's committee under the supervision of women's section education, health and youth section.
- To campaign for the expulsion of MASA in all international organisations and the acceptance of NAMDA in its place.

- To establish a national commission to oversee, monitor and stimulate the question of women's emancipation consisting of representatives of the NWECA and various departments and other structures of the organisations.
 - To assist in devising ways and means of assisting both men and women to be able to handle both their revolutionary obligations and social responsibilities.
 - To play the leading role in development of curriculum and strategies for political education of men and women in ANC regions.
 - To examine the ANC code of conduct to ensure that sexism, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and child battering as a mode of behaviour is prohibited and to ensure that measures are taken against those who practise such.
 - In conjunction with the department of constitutional and legal affairs to formulate a code of conduct specifically on men, women, marriage and relationships for protection of women's rights and obligations within the ranks of ANC and beyond.
 - Give priority to research on women's oppression in South Africa.
 - To call on all regions to discuss the question of women and for all democratic organisations within South Africa to intensify and broaden the discussion on the question of women so as to achieve the full emancipation of women.
 - To educate our society on lobola.
 - To give more challenging responsibilities to more women within the movement.
- C. Recognising the significant contribution that the international community has made to our liberation struggle, we call on progressive governments, women's organisations, trade unions, religious groups, non-governmental organisations and mass organisations to intensify the isolation of apartheid South Africa, by imposing mandatory and comprehensive sanctions.

Women artists should be stimulated to face and expose their problems honestly and bravely. Women writers should be encouraged to engage in historical research and portrayal of our women activists who have fought against apartheid colonialism. We still need to implement the 1981 conference resolution that we

produce a children's book on folklore and tales, and collect short stories by women for publication.

- In conjunction with the Department of Arts and Culture and Education effectively research record and document our diverse culture and their artistic expression especially in regard to women. Women scholars at home and abroad should be encouraged to participate in such to help us assess or know the differences that divide us and ties that bind us so that we be able to develop effective strategies to mobilise women for a post-apartheid South Africa and a united women's movement. Whilst recognising that culture is a slow dynamic process and cannot be superimposed as a pre-planned format, we must still make serious attempts to analyse the negative and positive aspects that should be eliminated or reinforced.
- Pay specific attention to mass media portrayals of women especially advertisements. Women who earn a living through participation in such advertisements should be drawn into the political campaign for women's emancipation. Also the involvement of children in advertising should be closely examined.
- To produce propaganda material in conjunction with the DIP - like posters, cartons, slogans etc. To use in the campaign for women's emancipation and in political education of women and about women.
- To record and document and wherever possible distribute revolutionary culture in its diverse forms of poetry, song and dance which the youths in the camps create.
- To encourage women writers to write in any of our national languages.
- To encourage our older generation of women to play a positive role in nurturing and passing on our cultural traditions to our younger generation.
- To encourage teaching and use of our national languages particularly in artistic fields, and that members of the ANC make every effort to speak our languages in the home and courses be established for our members who do not know any of the African languages.
- To reinforce Amandla, our national cultural ensemble, with new women members and that the new ideas, political and artistic be introduced to respond to the dynamic situation at home and the demands of the struggle.

- To mobilise health and education women workers to participate in the progressive movement.
 - We call on the international community to condemn the hostile act of the U S Administration to impose sanctions against the People's Republic of Angola and denial of aid to the SADCC countries and restrictions of movement of the ANC.
 - Conference called for the intensification of the campaign for the unconditional release of all political prisoners, for the stay of execution of the 30 comrades and for the release of Sheila Moiponi Nyanda (Priscilla) kidnapped in Swaziland by the racists.
 - Conference urged ANC leadership to give utmost priority and urgency to the completion of a cultural and academic boycott policy.
- D Recognising that the emancipation of women can only come through the success of the national liberation struggle we call on our women to increase their participation in all the campaigns and activities of the mass democratic movement such as:
- Campaign for the unconditional release of all political prisoners.
 - Campaign to save the lives of all South African combatants now awaiting execution.
 - Campaign against the continuous increases in rent, service, transport fares and all food prices.
 - Campaign to expose racist South African aggression against the Frontline States and their support to UNITA, MNR and their infiltration of terrorists in Zambia and Zimbabwe.
 - Campaign against continuous and increasing deaths in the cells.
 - Campaign against forced removals and evictions.
 - Campaign for a living wage, better working conditions and the mobilisation of the unemployed.
 - Campaign to render the country ungovernable and apartheid unworkable.
- E. Realising that the emancipation of women is not only the duty of women but of both men and women alike - comrades in arms.

We call upon the mass democratic movement to incorporate and integrate the emancipation of women into their programmes of action. No society will be free unless its women are emancipated.

Amandla!!! Matlaa!!!

- Every woman a combatant.
- For the all round organisation and greater unity of women for the Seizure of Power.