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**BROAD STRATEGIC TASKS FACING THE ANC
AFTER APRIL 27**

Draft Discussion Paper

Introduction

[Note : This paper does not purport to provide a comprehensive strategy for the period that lies ahead. Its aim is primarily to provide a framework for discussion and pinpoint problem areas]

The ANC was formed in the wake of the 1910 act of Union, first to unite the African people and over time it became a broad movement of liberation dedicated to building a new nation on a democratic foundation. The Reconstruction and Development Programme is one of the products of this nation building project and it needs to be understood not as a series of technical demands but as one of a series of processes correcting the wrongs of 1910, ensuring that sovereignty becomes popular and substantial.

This paper does not focus on this history but looks primarily at the present. As a result of struggles on a variety of fronts over many decades, culminating in the phase of ungovernability of the 1980s, a new phase and terrain were opened up on February 2 1990 with the unbanning of our organisations. The years that followed saw us engaging the regime in negotiations and various forms of mass struggle.

Out of these processes we achieved something fundamentally new, which constitutes the concrete conditions under which the ANC will assume office and will have to implement its programme of transformation.

Within these conditions there are opportunities to advance the strategic objectives of the ANC and its allies, and also concrete obstacles, ranging from counterrevolution to the specific conditions of government under which we will operate

The resolution of these problems and utilisation of prospects opened up, raise questions regarding the role of the ANC in government and the relationship between parliamentary democracy and mass democracy.

How substantial the opportunities will be and how formidable the obstacles we encounter, will be related to the character of the election victory that we obtain.

Meaning of Presumed election victory on April 27

On April 27 we will make a decisive break with the past, through democratically electing a parliament. It is a decisive but not complete break. It should be a moment of great victory, yet not completion of our tasks as a movement aiming to free our people from apartheid tyranny. It should open the possibilities for every widening and deepening of democracy and through RDP bettering the lives of all.

April 27 is thus a crucial *moment* in an ongoing *process of democratisation and transformation*

- * We enter a fundamentally new period and conditions of struggle. We will operate in institutions that were previously not open to us, allowing the possibility of progress previously impossible.
- * We need to establish how best we can function in this period to achieve our fundamental objectives. But we must immediately set about achieving realizable, substantial goals that contribute towards the realization of our broad overall strategic objectives.

It has been remarked that after April 27 we assume office, but not power. We need to be very clear as to the character of the obstacles that we face, but more importantly what type of power is needed to take us forward in this new terrain.

A strategy must address how best we can use the opportunities, what forces we harness, how best we can marshal these forces, organised in what manner, to advance our goals. The same strategy has to address how best the obstacles and the constraints can be overcome or minimised.

Such an analysis requires both a command of the broad sweep of forces entailed as well as a specific analysis of concrete conditions of government - in particular in a system of GNU. Such a GNU may take on a number of permutations which we cannot entirely predict.

We are committed to the traditional goals of our movement - broad national democratic transformation and this entails both democratic empowerment and self-empowerment and a programme of reconstruction and development. The question is how we as a movement understand and develop the link between the various centres of **democratic power** and harness these towards achieving broad democratic goals.

The GNU/Parliament

We enter governments of national unity *at various levels* - at the central level as well as provincial and local. Our powers are conditioned by the fact that we have partners in these governments who do not share our objectives, our conception of nation building and RDP.

The power of our opponents may be greater where they are part of government, all the greater where election victory has made their place more powerful.(though this may not be the case in that we may if dominant, win them over to our plans)[There are of course many other scenarios]

Their power as an obstacle may be consistently so in the bureaucracy. That is why our power at the moment of assuming office, may often be limited in the GNU(s) and certainly least in the bureaucracy

We will occupy dominant power in parliament and the GNU but there are other centres of power in the civil service, army, parastatals, economy etc.,which are virtually unreconstructed.

We need to consider how best we can advance national and democratic power in the face of opposition in each of these sites of power and how best we can reconstruct such sites. Where required it may be possible to shift power towards another site where the democratic force is more powerfully manifested.

This means, amongst other things, that we need to carefully analyse the way in which government is structured and ensure that ministries are devised in a manner that manifests the least blockage of democratic and transformational advance.

If we rely on the GNU and the civil service alone for implementation the RDP is doomed.

We should recall that while the GNU entails restraints imposed by partners who may fly in the face of huge majority aspirations, the parliament will more truly reflect popular power. How best do we balance the relationship between the two institutions in order to allow minority participation in parliament, without negating the importance of the numbers who through the election have indicated what they want government to do?

Central power and decentralisation

We have agreed to an interim constitution that entails governments of national unity at all levels. Insofar as the RDP and democratisation in general has to be realised and implemented at all levels, this means that there may be a possible conflict between the national level and the provincial.

How do we deal with such conflicts? A difference between the national and a particular region may not necessarily be something negative and we must operate, as a new government in a manner that recognises the possibility of individual regional creativity that may differ from that of the approach of other regions.

This is not to say that there may not be attempts by a region to actually frustrate national reconstruction goals?

We need to work out how to deal with this, while distinguishing such attempts to frustrate overall transformational goals, from legitimate regional interests that need to be accommodated or dealt with sensitively.

Cumulative and qualitative gains

The character of the terrain in which we will be operating is therefore one where, because of the constraints that we face, there will be prolonged and ongoing contest and struggle over the direction and character of the transition. There are some who advise us that 'successful transitions' do not seek to go beyond political rights. The concept of democracy that we are urged to accept is one that does not consider the social conditions of our people.

Consequently our advance will, entail struggle for a process of cumulative advance towards the consolidation of national democratic transformation. No single structural reform will in itself complete this process. But considered together, over time we must overcome obstacles and secure the series of advances that will entail a qualitative transformation in the lives of those who are now oppressed.

What power do we deploy ?

In order to achieve such an advance requires a combination of forces inside and outside of parliament. This interrelated array of forces has to be deployed against a range of obstacles. These obstacles have to be clearly identified in order to develop the most appropriate way of dealing with each.

We need to understand that the balance of forces may take a variety of permutations depending on our strength nationally as well as within the various provinces. We need to cater for a variety of scenarios. At this moment there are numerous surveys forecasting a landslide election victory. We need to cater for that type of situation as well as the possibility (that has been the fate of many election contestants with such substantial leads forecast) that we perform badly, even getting below 50% of the vote.

In our case the translation of poll support into the logistics of transport to the poll and actually casting a vote is a lot more difficult than it will be for some of the minority parties.

Whatever permutation the balance of forces takes in any one province or nationally, that will merely be one terrain of opposition. We will still encounter many other centres of power where the democratic forces are not in command.

All of this makes it essential that we supplement the power of parliament and our power in the GNU with the popular power of the people outside.

The ANC must be reconstituted in a manner that best harnesses our membership in the new conditions where we are the dominant force in government. We need to ensure that there is a close and dynamic link between the ANC in parliament, in the cabinet and the ANC outside. These should all form contingents of support for the democratic and transformational goals that we advance.

How parliamentarians have conducted themselves in the past ought not to be our guide. Our representatives must be understood as political leaders, who form part of a coherent plan for building the organisation inside and outside parliament.

We need also to understand how the new conditions can be used by those located in the extra-parliamentary ANC to supplement the power of those in parliament, in implementing the popular mandate.

But it is not the ANC alone in or out of parliament that can ensure the implementation of this national and democratic programme for transformation.

We need to draw on the insights and involve a variety of organs of civil society organised in various sectors, that stand to benefit if the programme is implemented. Together we can drive this process against the resistance of various vested interests.

The ANC must interact, consult and cooperate on a continuous basis with a variety of sectoral formations to advance their democratic goals, defend and deepen democracy and supplement government's efforts in implementing the RDP

Concept of democracy

What the RDP aims at is informed by a specific concept of democracy all of whose elements must be unpacked and elaborated :

* **Representative democracy** at various levels - and for our representatives to link up with our mass support base it means that we have to develop adequate processes and fora of accountability and

mandates etc. The representatives in parliament must develop distinct report back methods for the public in general as well as the ANC itself. There must also be transparency and they must operate within a publicly known code of conduct. [Commissions need to discuss specific proposals]

* **Participatory democracy** inter alia in various forums, such as the National Economic Forum, Housing Forum etc. These have to be transformed from sites created in conditions of state illegitimacy, into forums of consultation and cooperation to realize the aims of the RDP.

* **Direct democracy** of a variety of types - self-empowerment and self-initiated action by organised forces on a variety of fronts, sometimes in support of RDP sometimes advancing local demands.

We must also empower ordinary citizens to exercise their rights, as individuals, who may or may not choose to belong to organisations or street committees or any other structures. The framework of democracy that we inaugurate must be one that allows ordinary people to do things that they have never considered within their rights and which gives them the capacity to understand and act on knowledge that was not previously theirs. They must have access to what was previously barred, including of course the system of justice, where economic factors must form no barrier.

Are we in a position to combine a process that must be :

* **Government driven in some respects** We must expect a democratic government to take definite responsibility for the implementation of the RDP and to ensure speedy advance with programmes of electrification, housing, education, job creation etc etc. It must provide a coherent framework for all actors to contribute towards this democratic transformation and should actively intervene through legislation, financial measures etc etc

*** *People driven and organisational drive*** (in that the people must be organised and in some cases organisations have to be revived and created to achieve this)

When we speak of a people-driven process we are not speaking of anarchistic popular actions, but people harnessed in an organised manner towards a particular goal. So when we speak of a process being people-driven, we mean driven through organisations, in particular the ANC-SACP-COSATU alliance and all the organisations of the MDM. In some cases these organisations bring together already existing organised workers or other sectors. In other cases, sectors may not be adequately organised. It is the responsibility of the alliance in particular and specific sectors where there is a particular element of a sector unorganised, to ensure that such organisation is stimulated. We think here, particularly of rural areas, where there is practically no organisation and where in many cases the ANC is weak and also the strengthening of existing civic organisation.

But the implementation of the RDP goes wider than any previous processes and is in keeping with the broad conception of nation building which guides us. Insofar as a number of organisations, not part of the MDM or other alliances with which we have worked, have something to contribute towards health or education or other programmes, these organisations must be drawn in and their advice and support sought.

Reconstituting the ANC

We have looked at the government and the constraints under which it seeks to drive the process

What about the ANC? Are we preparing for an ANC that can ensure that the power of the people is deployed to ensure that the process succeeds

Do we have an ANC that acts sufficiently broadly to harness the powers of the various organs of civil society to help break through the blockages

Do we provide the conditions for self-empowerment, conditions where as in the 1980s the creativity of the people is unleashed, this time, not against an illegitimate regime, but to advance democratisation and transformation?

Clearly the question has not yet been adequately confronted, partly because throughout the last four years we have faced immediate challenges, negotiations, violence and now elections. The terrain of coexistence between an ANC as a governing party and an organisation that exists outside of government is one we have not yet explored and the problems of which we can only start to envisage.

We need to avoid two extremes in considering the future role of the extra-parliamentary ANC. One is to see it as a big or small echo of whatever is done by the government. It is not merely an extension of the government, but a force with a degree of autonomy in the sense that it has an existence that is linked to ANC government initiated projects as well as independent of these.

Because it is located in the communities, it must relate to them not merely to defend whatever our representatives may have done, but also to respond to issues that may never have come to the attention of parliament.

This does not mean that the extra-parliamentary ANC becomes an oppositional force. It should be conceived as a force acting in combination with the ANC in parliament, together working towards the realization of broad national goals. The ANC outside parliament can do things that cannot be done in parliament. It can link up with people and problems that need to be known by the organisation as a whole. We must be equipped to do this.

Arising from this, some of the questions we need to address can already be considered in this conference, in commissions.

* Within an overall organisational plan for the building of the ANC we need to consider whether it is necessary to concentrate on recruitment rather than consolidation of our already massive membership.

What are the tasks of the various structures? How do we ensure that the various structures are able to perform them? Is the present structure of the organisation adequate to meet the needs of the new conditions?

*To what extent do we still need policy departments when the ANC is in government? If we still need them how should they relate to the corresponding departments of state. Do we not, for example, still need an ANC department of health, to monitor things on the ground, feed into government, what government may not know, link up through structures with other health organisations as well as grassroots members of various organisations.

* What is the character of the relationship between a department like DIA and the new Ministry of Foreign Affairs, assuming it is under our control? Does DIA dissolve into government, or do we still need an autonomous ANC department able to take actions e.g. solidarity with various countries, that may be too sensitive for a Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially in a GNU?

Parliament and extra parliament

Much of this requires from us a clearer definition of the link between the two terrains and the development of an organisation and political plan of advance that includes clear tasks for actors inside and outside of parliament

One thing must be clear. While parliamentarians may originally have been nominated or held office in SANCO, Cosatu, SADTU they do not represent those organisations in parliament. In the case of Cosatu they do not continue to hold Cosatu positions. In the case of SACP, representatives are not there as SACP, though many of those elected may continue to be office bearers of the SACP.

What is distinct about the ANC is that the parliamentary ANC is surrounded by a specific ANC constitutional structure, in the first place periodic national conferences and the NEC. How will the authority of the constitutional structures relate to cabinet, parliamentary caucuses, regional governments and so on? The tendency in most parliamentary democracies is for the cabinet and parliamentary caucuses to become prime decision makers. Can the ANC permit this while remaining an organisation rooted in the masses? Or will or ought the ANC to become an organisation or party whose connection to the masses is less rooted, and accountable mainly in periodic elections?

THE THREAT TO DEMOCRACY, IN PARTICULAR FROM THE RIGHT WING

This paper does not attempt to make any new contribution on this question. It is nevertheless essential that we are self-critical when we look at our past efforts. We need to approach this question in a manner that includes the following:

- * Identifying the specific threat involved, whether it comes from an organisation, group of organisations, individuals, located in and out of state apparatuses.

We need to identify the character of the threat that these groups, individuals etc constitute-is it military and of what character? There must not be complacency about the threat, yet we must not make the mistake of lumping all forms of danger under headings like civil war.

Is the threat one of destabilisation of another kind? Included in this may be entirely nonviolent forms such as the withholding of agricultural products etc, which can have a devastatingly destabilising effect

- *The second broad question is how we address the threat and there is not one answer. The answer must differ for each type of threat and we need to devise alternative ways of dealing with the same threat, dividing its elements etc.

One of the ways of dealing with the danger is politically. Do we engage the right wing and what do we say to them? How do we set the political agenda, instead of responding to their demands, which may not necessarily represent the concrete fears of their followers e.g. the demand for a volkstaat may be an expression of a deeper fear. Can we not address the fear, without meeting it through a volkstaat?

A fundamental question that we need to be able to answer is how the right is incorporated politically, given the unfolding of a process of building a new nation. They are not a traditional 'loyal opposition' that has the chance of alternating in and out of power as do the Conservative and Labour Party in Britain. In a sense their conceptions tend to be outside of the framework of 'the new South Africa' At the same time, the Freedom Alliance manifesto has reference to a commitment to nonracialism and nonsexism. Does this mean that there is room in some sectors of the right, for debate?

The importance of this question lies in the danger where the right does not have a political outlet. That means that engagement could be reduced to increasingly violent confrontations

** Is the RDP not a way of addressing elements of the forces that might form part of a counterrevolutionary base? Cosatu has successfully organised sections of the white working class whom one could envisage forming a counterrevolutionary base. The fears that lead many people to join right wing groups, the insecurity and in many cases - particularly with regard to the black right wing, is sheer privation, denial of basic necessities-can be partially addressed through the RDP*

Certainly the pool of homeless, rootless and marginalised who are drawn on for apparently mindless acts of violence are often found around squatter settlements and so on. How does the reconstruction programme address such groups?

*Militarily. Obviously where political and economic solutions fail we may have to respond through security measures. Already there are military attacks on our people and our members and leaders. How do we develop the capacity to respond, including ensuring adequate command over the security forces. In particular how do we deal with them in the immediate transition period, including ensuring that they respect

and defend the election results.

CONCLUSION

Our strategic tasks now relate to the earliest motivations for the formation of the ANC-the realization of popular sovereignty, ensuring that South Africa in fact belongs to its people. For the first time we must see that sovereignty is popular sovereignty.

For that to be meaningful means not merely the crucial acquisition of political freedom, but the implementation of fundamental social and economic transformation.

Reference is sometimes made to the expectations of the masses as a danger. The RDP provides a realistic programme for speedily responding to these expectations. But the reference to the expectations of the masses is sometimes linked to the fear that we will lose a second election. Does this mean that we will lose it if we do meet the needs of the masses and create certain unhappiness amongst privileged sectors? Or is it meant that we should postpone such social remedies in the interests of supposed stability

There are cases where governments such as the Sandinistas in Nicaragua set about a process of transformation and had to face destabilisation on a scale that lost them the elections.

We cannot be deterred from implementing the RDP by the threats of our enemies. We cannot be deterred from ensuring that the masses benefit from the wealth that they have created by the fear of losing second elections. If it comes to that, far better that we honour our promises but lose elections, than that we betray our people.

We are not recklessly suggesting that we take a course that risk future election victories. But this conference must fearlessly choose a course that aligns us with the poorest of the poor and develops a strategy to better their lives in the shortest possible time. That may lead to resistance, but in the long run (that may be preceded by some attempts at counterrevolution) is the only basis for enduring stability and peace.