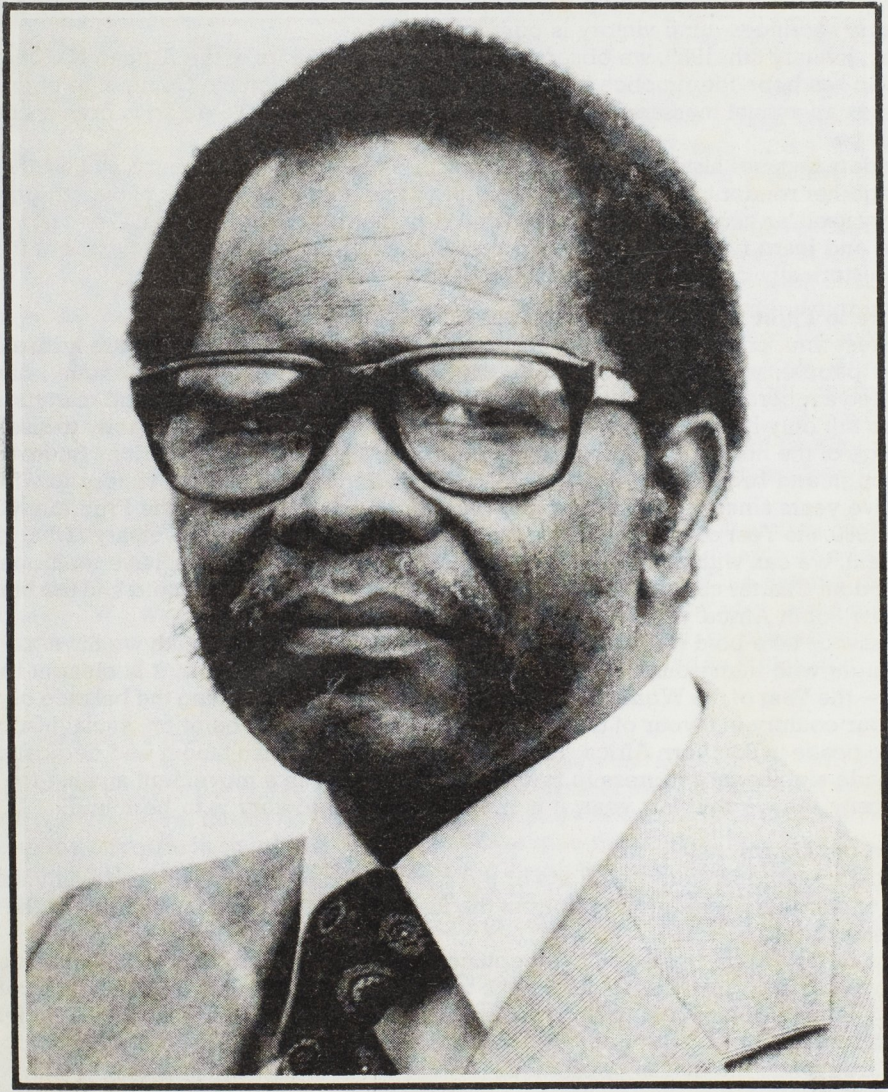


**RENDER SOUTH AFRICA  
UNGOVERNABLE**



**MESSAGE OF THE  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS  
ON THE OCCASION OF 8TH JANUARY, 1985  
DELIVERED BY COMRADE PRESIDENT O R TAMBO**

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## *Compatriots,*

A new year has begun, bringing with it fresh hopes and new challenges. I am sure that I express our collective conviction when I say that during this decade, each year has brought us closer to our cherished goal — the total liberation of our country.

The bells that rang in the New Year were, for us, a call to battle, summoning us to ever greater involvement and persistence in the struggle for democratic change. We can and will meet the new challenges successfully. The confidence with which we make this bold assertion is based on our unflinching commitment to fight with all our might, making all the necessary sacrifices, until victory is ours.

Today, January 8th, 1985, we observe and celebrate 73 years of the African National Congress. As has been the practice in the past, the National Executive Committee of the ANC addresses an annual message to you on this our national day. To do so is both a duty and a privilege.

It is a duty because history has entrusted us with the destiny of our country, and we therefore must together render to one another, to the allies and active supporters of our struggle, and to history itself, an account of our stewardship over the past twelve months. We must together analyse and learn from our experience on the battlefield to victory, to carve out the path to our historically determined destination.

### **A Future to Fight For, an Enemy to Face**

To address you, compatriots, on January 8th, 1985, is a privilege. For we are addressing a fighting people, who, during a particularly ferocious offensive by the enemy, have accumulated a record of resistance and struggle worthy of our great heroes and martyrs, a people who not only have the resilience that defies defeat, but also the capacity to rise to the challenge of the hour and move on to the offensive, a people with a glorious future to fight for, a tough and brutal enemy to face, an assured and epoch-making victory to win.

It is five years since we rallied our people around the demands of the Freedom Charter during 1980, the Year of the Charter. This year, as we mark the 30th anniversary of that historic document, we can with confidence say that, in struggle, millions of us have reaffirmed that the Freedom Charter constitutes the embodiment of our deepest aspirations and the blueprint for a new South Africa.

1984 saw us take bold steps forward on the road to freedom. The path we have traversed was fraught with numerous dangers and hazards. But, despite these, it is clear at the end of 1984 — the Year of the Women — that we have succeeded in shifting the balance of power within our country in favour of the forces fighting for national liberation, social justice and genuine peace in Southern Africa. Through persistent collective labour and dedication, we have made significant progress in forging a mighty people's movement against the racist monstrosity. As we said last year, it is in the attack that victory is to be found.

### **Unity of the Oppressed**

By attacking, we defeated the efforts of the racist regime to mobilise the Indian and Coloured, or so-called Coloured, sections of the Black population into acceptance of the apartheid constitution.

By our refusal to be bullied into acceptance of the enemy's constitutional schemes, we reaffirmed our determination to defend the unity of the Black people in pursuit of a common victory against a common enemy. We were asserting the truth that freedom is indivisible, that freedom for some is freedom for none, and hence, that no section of the Black people can be free while another is oppressed.

The defeat of the enemy's plans in August expressed our common assertion that apartheid cannot be reformed. By boycotting the apartheid elections we denounced Botha's 'reform' programme as a sham.

These victories were of great importance for the further advance of our struggle. They served to raise the degree of isolation of the oppressive regime, and strengthened the ranks of the forces committed to the victory of the democratic revolution in our country. They confirmed our commitment to the revolutionary perspective of the seizure of power by the people and the building of a new society in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

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### **Organised Workers of our Country**

By attacking, we frustrated the enemy's attempts to contain the militant democratic trade union movement and transform it into a tame and timid shadow that accords with the regime's wishes. This increased the fears that the White minority regime has of the power of the organised Black workers of our country.

That is why, during the past year, as at other times in the past, it has imprisoned, banned, banished and even assassinated leaders and activists of the democratic trade union movement. We take this opportunity to salute the workers of our country, who, in the teeth of the most vicious racist persecution, have sustained and kept alive the spirit of militant democratic trade unionism such as is embodied in the policy and programme of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU).

During 1984, in addition to the magnificent shop-floor struggles waged by the workers, we were inspired by the united action taken by Black and White workers, and their various unions, in their confrontation with Highveld Steel. Again, in October, for the first time in 38 years, the Black mine workers embarked on a co-ordinated national offensive in this most sensitive sector of the South African economy.

The lesson from the victories we have scored and the advances we have made is that, in future, our objective must be that wherever a struggle erupts — be it mine or factory, a farm or a building site, a shop or a service centre — we must emerge from such struggles with stronger workers' organisations, a higher level of political consciousness and a greater determination to fight on as a united force, whatever the cost to ourselves as individuals.

The organised workers formed the core of the historic Transvaal stay-at-home which paralysed industry and commerce in the economic heartland of the country and compelled the capitalist owners of property to speak out. In an unprecedented move, the organisation of the leading capitalists drew the attention of the ruling group to the fact that the continued use of the old methods of repression would only serve to inspire the workers to intensify their offensive.

During this massive struggle, we achieved a level of united action among all sections of the oppressed, and the democratic forces as a whole, which must serve as a basis for the further escalation of the united people's struggle for the victory of the national democratic revolution. We warmly salute all the workers and trade unionists who, in action, affirmed the correctness of the perspective we put forward last year, and the offensive of the working class is, and must be, an integral part of the national liberation struggle.

### **The Youth, the Pride of our Nation**

The student and working youth of our country have once more confirmed their place in our hearts as the pride of the nation. These relentless fighters for a South Africa that we can proudly call our own have, throughout this past year, swelled the ranks of the mass movement by joining the struggle in hundreds of thousands. Despite the campaign of murder and terror unleashed by the racists against them, including the very young, they have stood firm in their demands. They have refused to break from the ranks of the struggling masses. In saluting our students and working youth, we can truly say that they have earned for themselves the honour of being called the Young Lions.

Through their actions, supported and reinforced by the workers and the parents, they have forced the apartheid regime to give ground on many issues. To build on these advances, we must ensure that the Education Charter becomes the common platform of teachers, parents and students in the mass struggle for a democratic system of education.

A special responsibility devolves on our youth during 1985. By its decision to observe the International Year of the Youth, the racist regime has thrown down the gauntlet to the youth of our country. Among the numerous crimes this regime has committed and continues to commit against our people, some of its most heinous have been specifically against our youth and children.

On the shoulders of the apartheid regime rest such crimes as the scandalously high infant mortality rate amongst Black children; the stunting of their growth through the use of child labour; the warping of their intellectual development through Bantu Education.

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## **Youth Must Make this Year Their Own**

South Africa is littered with the graves of young patriots who were massacred by the apartheid regime in 1976 and in the subsequent years. This self-same regime, which bears responsibility for these crimes, has, with great impudence, decided to observe the International Year of the Youth, whose motto is: Participation, Development and Peace! We call upon the youth to take this year as their own and to use it as a means to advance our own perspectives of youth participation in society, in development and in the struggle for peace. The gains we have scored in youth mobilisation and organisation provide a basis for greater progress toward the emergence of a society which will defend and promote the genuine interests of our youth.

We designated 1984 as *The Year of the Women* with the express purpose of concentrating our efforts on the mobilisation of our womenfolk as active participants in the struggle waged by our national liberation movement. The response to our call, *Women Organise and Unite for People's Power* has been commendable. New democratic women's organisations have emerged. Greater numbers of our womenfolk have been drawn into struggle.

We observed historic days like the 30th anniversary of the Federation of South African Women at impressive rallies. National Women's Day — August 9th — was turned into a week of campaigning against the fraudulent Coloured and Indian parliamentary elections. In this manner our womenfolk further promoted the unity of all the oppressed and democratic forces, transcending the barriers of race, colour, sex and creed.

Intensive grassroot mobilisation of women as equal participants in the overall national struggle has laid the basis for the creation of a national women's organisation which could be founded on the principles contained in the historic Women's Charter.

## **Women Fight in the Front Ranks**

Our women were active in all the battles which confronted our communities during the Year. In many of these, as in Sebokeng, they fought in the front ranks. As parents, mothers and workers, they stood firmly beside their menfolk and children against forced removals, starvation wages, increased rents and taxes, inferior education and health services, demanding full citizenship rights for all our people in a unitary, non-racial society.

The encouraging response of our women to the call to join Umkhonto We Sizwe, which has resulted in more women joining the people's army during the course of the year, has been one of the best ways of observing the Year of the Women.

The reaction to our appeal by the international community in general, and women's organisations in particular, in practically all the continents of the globe, was most outstanding in mobilising more moral and material support for our struggle. This support was crowned by the presentation of the Eugene Cotton Award by the Women's International Democratic Federation to our dear sister and mother, Albertina Sisulu.

We call on our women to build on these impressive achievements. We urge other sections of our people to continue to give their support and concrete assistance to our heroic women, mothers and sisters, so that they can play their rightful role as co-fighters and co-liberators of our motherland.

## **Trade Union Unity**

Despite all the achievements we have so far made, we are still faced with the necessity of accomplishing other tasks we have set ourselves, particularly the unity of the democratic trade union movement. 1985 is the 30th anniversary of the founding of SACTU. During this anniversary year, let us consolidate the gains we have thus far registered. We need to intensify our efforts to form one united democratic trade union federation. No democratic trade union should be excluded from such a federation.

The working class of our country has demonstrated its combativeness in the unprecedented number of strikes that took place during the past year. So that this militancy will not be dissipated, we should now strive towards one union for each industry, the organisation of the unorganised and the unemployed, and the launching of a mass offensive against the reduction of our living standards. We should treat the injury done to the 6 500 SASOL workers as an injury to all workers, and to all of us.

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We must harness the collective strength of the working class not merely to improve the immediate economic conditions of that class, but to bring about democratic change in our country. The ANC joins those trade unionists who call for greater involvement on the part of workers and their unions in the struggle for democratic change.

1985 falls on the centenary of May Day. In recognition of the bonds that link the workers of South Africa with those of other lands, May Day was marked in a number of industrial centres throughout South Africa during 1984. We call on all our workers to ensure by their actions that May Day is recognised as a paid public holiday.

In a unique show of international solidarity, the Black mine workers, who are amongst the lowest paid and most brutally exploited of our workers, dipped into their over-lean pockets and made a modest donation towards the strike fund of the British miners, who are waging a life and death struggle to save their jobs. We take this opportunity to commend this exemplary action on the part of our miners.

### **The Rural People's Right to the Land**

The dispossession of our people of the land that is theirs remains one of the most burning national grievances. The gross injustice of this historic crime has been compounded by the racists' arrogant attempt to deprive the African majority of their inalienable birthright as citizens of their country, South Africa. Millions of our people in the rural areas are brutally exploited as agricultural workers on farms carved out of their ancestral lands. Their daily lives are dominated by the dictates of the racist White farmers and agricultural companies against whom they have absolutely no redress, because they are the least organised and mobilised. The land question must be resolved, if needs be, the hard way.

In the meantime, we repeat our call to our people to give serious attention to the organisation and mobilisation of our rural masses. Basing ourselves on the needs of the people, and taking due account of the concrete conditions of their existence, we must devise suitable organisational structures and mechanisms to reach our rural masses and provide them with the organisational and political tools to defend themselves against exploitation and to assert their right to the land. As we said last year, we must place the perspective of seizing the land from the dispossessor in front of our rural masses and educate them to understand that this is a task that calls for dedication, determination and sacrifice.

The solution to the land question is inextricably tied to the struggle against the Bantustans, where the puppets, not content to do the dirty work of the Pretoria racists, have taken it upon themselves to impose even greater burdens on our oppressed people. Some of these Bantustan puppets have taken firm positions on the side of their masters in Pretoria and against the oppressed people and their organisations. Whenever the popular masses rise and deliver telling blows against the apartheid system their puppet voices are heard above the din of battle, denouncing the people and defending the people's enemy.

While opposing the revolutionary violence of the national liberation movement, they have not hesitated to unleash systematic violence against the fighters for the people's cause. They have banned the trade unions and brutalised trade union activists. They are fanning fratricidal conflict amongst our people in order to ensure the perpetuation of the apartheid system from which they benefit. Some have gone so far as to ban the UDF and other democratic organisations. This situation can no longer be countenanced. The offensive against the apartheid system must be extended to reach the Bantustans and other apartheid institutions in all corners of our country and among all population groups.

The plight of the thousands of our people whose homes are regularly bulldozed to the ground, and who are regularly bundled up and transported to distant and inhospitable parts of our country, requires our full attention and concerted actions of solidarity. We must elaborate organisational methods and forms of action to halt this crime against our people and to express, in a concrete manner, our solidarity with them. As we have said, we must organise the unemployed into organs of struggle, enabling them to engage in a determined offensive for jobs and adequate unemployment allowances.

### **Pretoria Plots with the West**

We have just gone through what was definitely one of the most trying periods in the experience of our movement and struggle. We have survived one of the most lethal attacks on our movement. Our courage and tenacity as a people during the difficult days of 1984 enabled us to withstand a fierce enemy onslaught and proceed to launch the biggest offen-

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sive that has inspired our allies and friends to greater supportive action and solidarity.

Effectively exploiting unprecedented natural calamities, the historical legacy of colonialism and by using its own puppet forces, the regime sought to impose conditions on the neighbouring states which were intended to paralyse the ANC and cripple the liberation struggle. A plot was jointly hatched between Pretoria, the United States and some countries of Western Europe which, in a bid to drive a wedge between ourselves and the rest of the people of Southern Africa, sought to coerce their governments to turn against the ANC and the liberation struggle. This plot was equally intended to sow divisions among the Front Line States themselves and to distance them from the rest of Africa.

At great cost to themselves and their people, the Front Line States have borne the brunt of overt racist aggression, deliberate acts of economic disruption and political destabilisation. To their great credit, they have stood united and resolute in their commitment to the cause of African freedom and independence, and especially in their total support for the ANC and SWAPO.

The Kingdom of Lesotho, completely surrounded by racist-controlled territory, has, with singular courage and determination, persistently rebuffed the aggression, bullying and blackmail of the Pretoria regime. These countries of our region have now been reinforced in their stand by the decision of the 20th Summit Meeting of the OAU to give priority attention to the struggle in Southern Africa. Under the current Chairmanship of President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Chairman of the Front Line States, the OAU is poised to intervene effectively during the current year.

### **World Support for our Struggle**

As we stated last year, our struggle consists of four interlinked and mutually reinforcing elements. These are, first, the vanguard role of the underground structures of the ANC; second, the united mass political action of the people; third, the armed offensive spearheaded by Umkhonto we Sizwe; and fourth, the international campaign to isolate the apartheid regime while winning world-wide moral, political and material support for the struggle. With regard to the second of these elements, there can be no doubt that we have registered great successes in raising the united mass action of the people to higher levels.

It is equally undeniable that we also achieved new victories as regards the fourth element, namely, the drive to isolate the apartheid regime and to win world-wide moral, political and material support for our struggle. In this regard, we should mention a few salient successes.

The efforts of the apartheid regime to break out of its isolation have ended in dismal failure. Botha's visit to Europe ended as a severe rebuff for the racists. The new government of New Zealand adopted firm positions against the apartheid system, forcing the Pretoria regime to withdraw its diplomats from that country. The widespread and unprecedented demonstrations in the USA against apartheid and the Reagan Administration's policy of 'constructive engagement' are an accurate barometer of the mounting isolation of the apartheid regime as well as of the increasing scope and depth of support for the cause of liberation in South Africa and Namibia.

Likewise, the attempts of the apartheid regime to project itself as reformist have been exposed and condemned by the international community. Accordingly the UN Security Council has rejected Botha's amended apartheid Constitution as null and void, and of no force or effect. It affirmed the need for majority rule in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

And yet these achievements are not sufficient. We need to intensify our international of-fense in the New Year, further to isolate the apartheid regime, strengthen our own ties of solidarity with progressive humanity and thus further complicate the situation of the apartheid regime within our country.

During this past year we also took our struggle forward by beginning to carry out another strategic task we had set ourselves. As you will recall, last year we said we must begin to use our accumulated strength to destroy the organs of government of the apartheid regime.

### **We Reject Illegitimate Rule**

We have now set out upon this path. We have taken impressive strides towards rendering the country ungovernable. This has not only meant the destruction of the community councils; our rejection of the apartheid constitution was, in its essence, a reaffirmation of our rejection of the illegitimate rule of the Botha regime. Other struggles, including those around

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the issue of education as well as the stay-at-home, themselves pitted our democratic power against the power of the forces of oppression, racism and counter-revolution, for the defeat of the latter and its replacement with popular power.

In this coming period, we shall need to pursue, with even greater vigour, the task of reducing the capacity of the colonial apartheid regime to continue its illegal rule of our country. The destruction of the organs of government weakens the regime and is a necessary part of our continuing mass offensive.

The victories we scored during the year have plunged our opponents into an even deeper political crisis. Apart from denying them the chance to expand their social base, they further sharpened the contradictions and conflicts within the ruling group, and exposed the utter bankruptcy and failure of the overall political programme of the racists. These are important successes as they help further to weaken the enemy and shift the balance of power in our favour.

### **The Regime Knocked Off Balance**

Through struggle, we have forced the apartheid regime into a situation of confusion, indecision and an inability to define for itself any consistent direction of state policy. This situation has arisen because the efforts of this regime to project itself as a representative of the so-called forces of moderation, gradual and peaceful reform, have ended in failure. According to this tactical manoeuvre, the racists sought to present themselves as a reasonable and acceptable alternative to the revolutionary alliance headed by the ANC, on one hand, and the fascist coalition of the HNP and the Conservative Party on the other. Knocked out of balance by the intensity of our offensive, the White minority regime lurches from side to side, fumbling for an equilibrium it can no longer regain. On one day it pretends to be concerned about the condition of the Black majority and, on the next, pledges itself to the maintenance of White minority domination.

At the same time, the posturing of this regime has angered large sections of the diehard racists among the Whites who see the maintenance of the apartheid system as a holy crusade. Moved by their attachment to the benefits that accrue to them from the system of national oppression and the super-exploitation of the Black majority, the political representatives of this tendency in White politics are challenging the Botha regime for the allegiance of especially the Afrikaner population.

The disarray in the enemy camp has compelled some to examine the fundamental premise of the entire system of racial oppression. The realisation has begun to dawn on some of Botha's own supporters that no solutions to the problems confronting our country are possible without the participation of the Black and democratic majority, and the leaders of this majority.

There are yet others from among our White countrymen who, more far-sighted than others, have decided to break with a system that is so patently criminal. These have joined the democratic movement. We are confident that the numbers of such White compatriots will grow as an integral part of the forces of liberation which are destined to defeat the apartheid regime and liquidate the criminal system it upholds. In order to hasten the advent of that day, we must give the enemy no respite; no time to regroup and recover lost ground. It requires that we must stay on the attack.

### **Role of the Masses**

We are entering the second half of the 1980s. When we cast our minds back to the Year of the Charter — 1980 — and the subsequent years, the one feature that stands out is the ever-expanding and visible role of the masses of our people in the making of this history. As we enter this second half of the Decade of Liberation, it is necessary that we examine not only our striking power, but, even more important, the direction in which to strike and how to deliver the blow. In particular, it is necessary that we ask the question: at what pace — how fast — are we advancing towards the conquest of power?

The pace of our forward march depends on our success or failure to strengthen the first and the third of the four interlinked elements we have referred to, namely, the all-round activity of the underground structures of the ANC and the armed offensive spearheaded by Umkhonto we Sizwe.

With regard to these two decisive elements of our revolutionary struggle, we should neither dramatise our shortcomings nor blind ourselves to the reality that we have not advanced on these two fronts at a pace corresponding to our advance on the other two.

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prisoners.

We take pride in the fact that the international conscience, expressing itself through the Nobel Peace Committee, has decided to award the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize to a Black South African — Bishop Desmond Tutu. This is the second instance within 23 years that our people, and Africa, have been given this honour. Bishop Tutu walks in the steps of our beloved Chief Albert Luthuli.

There is no doubt that this is a tribute to our selfless dedication and our resistance to one of the most cruel and inhuman systems the world has ever known. The award does great credit to the role of our religious communities in the struggle for liberation and should be an inspiration to all of them to get the heresy of apartheid expunged from the statute books and from our lives. It once more emphasises the importance our people and the rest of the world attach to the contribution the religious leaders and masses of our country must continue to make in the struggle for justice, peace and life itself.

### **Sister Nations, Sister Movements**

We greet the fraternal people of Namibia and especially welcome among fighting ranks of our sister movement, SWAPO, the new Secretary General of SWAPO, Comrade Andimba Herman Toivo ja Toivo and his colleagues, whom the apartheid regime was forced to release from long terms of imprisonment. Their release and continued involvement in struggle will bring closer the day of freedom and independence for Namibia. In this regard we, the people of South Africa, demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of South African racist troops from Namibia and Angola.

We pay tribute to the Front Line States and the Kingdom of Lesotho for their firm and principled actions in defending our right of struggle and upholding the legitimacy and duty of Africa and the world to support our struggle.

We recognise the important contribution made by the OAU and various international organisations including the United Nations and its Agencies, the Non-Aligned Movement, the World Peace Council, the Socialist International — to mention but a few. They are largely responsible for ensuring that apartheid remains at the centre of world attention as a crime against humanity.

We congratulate our Palestinian brothers and sisters for successfully overcoming attempts to liquidate the Palestinian struggle. We support the call by the PLO for an international conference in furtherance of the struggle for a sovereign Palestinian homeland.

We condemn the continuing efforts of the US Administration to destabilise and overthrow the popular government of Nicaragua and express our firm and militant solidarity with the fraternal people of that heroic country.

We express our solidarity with the people of Grenada whose right to self-determination was grossly violated and continues to be circumscribed, following the naked aggression by the US armed forces.

We salute all people engaged in struggle for national liberation, especially El Salvador and East Timor. We pledge solidarity with all those struggling to defend their sovereignty, including the peoples of Southern Africa, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, the Middle East, Afghanistan and Cyprus. We welcome the successes of the democratic forces in Latin America, and are confident that the foothold of the apartheid regime in the American sub-continent will be totally eliminated.

Our people have come to appreciate and value the consistent solidarity and growing support for our struggle given by the socialist countries, the Nordic States and other countries.

Our ties with various governments, political parties and parliamentary groups in Western Europe and Australasia have grown stronger and we look forward to ever-closer relations and greater co-operation with them in the struggle against the apartheid system.

We pay tribute to the millions of people involved in the ever-expanding work within the worldwide anti-apartheid movement. They constitute a solid base of support for our struggle internationally. It is through their daily, and sometimes unknown, efforts that governments and peoples are kept alive to, and mobilised in action against, the numerous ploys of the South African racists to whitewash apartheid. In this context we welcome the momentous campaign undertaken by the people of the United States, which involves legislators, judges, bishops, trade unionists and other outstanding personalities and government officials, and which is targeted on pressurising the Reagan Administration to reverse its support for the Pretoria racist regime.



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We salute all these supporters and unsung heroes working for the cause of world peace and closer fellowship within the human race.

We take this opportunity once more to dip our banners in memory of that outstanding friend of our struggling people and movement, the late Indira Gandhi. We are certain that her successor as Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, will continue in her footsteps further to extend much appreciated all-round support to our struggle.

### **Year of the Cadre**

Rumours, emanating from the South African mass media, have been circulating about 'talks' between the African National Congress and the Botha regime. There have been no such talks. Your organisation at this juncture is concerned to improve our capacity to accomplish the tasks we have set for ourselves in the unfolding year. In this respect we shall, as you know, be holding a National Consultative Conference this year, from which we shall emerge united and doubly strengthened to carry our struggle forward.

The strength of any organisation lies in the calibre of its individual members and units. In order to advance in keeping with the momentum of our struggle we must improve the quality and expand the quantity of our membership. We need cadres of unquestionable loyalty, dedication and understanding of our struggle. In order to achieve such a high standard and spur our nation into a greater onslaught on the enemy and its institutions, we declare this year, 1985, **the Year of the Cadre!**

Let this year see us take big strides in further strengthening the organised underground structures of the ANC. Let us see greater mass political actions in all the provinces and districts of our country. Let it see us extend people's war to all corners of our land. Let it see the fastest and furthest possible co-ordinated advance on all fronts towards the goal of people's power.

There is no going back.  
Forward Always is our battle cry!  
The enemy cannot stop us.  
Our future is in our hands.

**Forward with the Year of the Cadre!  
Mobilise and March Forward  
to People's Power!  
Amandla Ngawethu!  
Matla ke A Rona!  
Power to the People!**

# THE FREEDOM CHARTER

**We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:**

that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people;

that our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;

that our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;

that only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief;

**And therefore, we, the people of South Africa, black and white together — equals, countrymen and brothers — adopt this Freedom Charter. And we pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.**

## THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN!

Every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and to stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws;

All people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country;

The rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex;

All bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government.

## ALL NATIONAL GROUPS SHALL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS!

There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races;

All people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs;

All national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride;

The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime;

All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.

## THE PEOPLE SHALL SHARE IN THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH!

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people;

The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the Banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole;

All other industry and trade shall be controlled to assist the well-being of the people;

All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

## THE LAND SHALL BE SHARED AMONG THOSE WHO WORK IT!

Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land redivided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger;

The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers;

Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

People shall not be robbed of their cattle, and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished.

## ALL SHALL BE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW!

No one shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without a fair trial;

No one shall be condemned by the order of any Government official;

The courts shall be representative of all the people;

Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance;

The police force and army shall be open to all on an equal basis and shall be the helpers and protectors of the people;

All laws which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed.

## ALL SHALL ENJOY EQUAL HUMAN RIGHTS!

The law shall guarantee to all their right to speak, to organise, to meet together, to publish, to preach, to worship and to educate their children;

The privacy of the house from police raids shall be protected by law;

All shall be free to travel without restriction from countryside to town, from province to province, and from South Africa abroad;

Pass Laws, permits and all other laws restricting these freedoms shall be abolished.

*Let all who love their people and their country now say, as we say here:  
"THESE FREEDOMS WE WILL FIGHT FOR, SIDE BY SIDE,  
THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES, UNTIL WE HAVE WON OUR LIBERTY."*

## THERE SHALL BE WORK AND SECURITY!

All who work shall be free to form trade unions, to elect their officers and to make wage agreements with their employers;

The state shall recognise the right and duty of all to work, and to draw full unemployment benefits;

Men and women of all races shall receive equal pay for equal work;

There shall be a forty-hour working week, a national minimum wage, paid annual leave, and sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers;

Miners, domestic workers, farm workers and civil servants shall have the same rights as all others who work;

Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished.

## THE DOORS OF LEARNING AND OF CULTURE SHALL BE OPENED!

The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;

All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;

The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;

Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children;

Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;

Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan; Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;

The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished.

## THERE SHALL BE HOUSES, SECURITY AND COMFORT!

All people shall have the right to live where they choose, to be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security;

Unused housing space to be made available to the people;

Rent and prices shall be lowered, food plentiful and no one shall go hungry;

A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state;

Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children;

Slums shall be demolished, and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, creches and social centres;

The aged, the orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the state;

Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all;

Fenced locations and ghettos shall be abolished, and laws which break up families shall be repealed.

## THERE SHALL BE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP!

South Africa shall be a fully independent state, which respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations;

South Africa shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation — not war;

Peace and friendship amongst all our people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all;

The people of the protectorates — Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland — shall be free to decide for themselves their own future;

The right of all the peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised, and shall be the basis of close co-operation.