



PRESIDENCY BUDGET

Service delivery must contribute to holistic human development

by MATHOLE MOTSHEKGA

President Jacob Zuma's vision, comprehensive plan and endorsement of NEPAD has amplified Seme's idea of the Regeneration of Africa. Whilst addressing the Oratory Contest at the University of Columbia in 1905, Dr Pixley Isaka Ka Seme spoke on the Regeneration of Africa. In this address, Seme called for a unique civilization for Africa and Africans. Like his contemporaries such as W.E.B Du Bois and Marcus Garvey, Seme was inspired by the glories of ancient Ethiopia and Egypt. In this regard, Seme exclaimed that "All the glory of Egypt belongs to Africa and her people. These monuments are the indestructible memories of their great and original genius". Marcus Garvey also made the regeneration of Africa a rallying point for Africa and her Diaspora. In 1914, Marcus Garvey established the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in Harlem, New York for the advancement of the regeneration of Africa. Seme and Garvey's ideas for the regeneration of Africa found practical expression in the Harlem Renaissance. The literary and cultural awakening called the Harlem Renaissance brought more attention to the African Diaspora. In its own way, the Harlem Renaissance was an African Consciousness Movement which started with the Prince Hall Masonic Movement and the Ethiopian Church Movement. The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s witnessed a remarkable flowering of creative energies by

African American writers seeking inspiration from and celebrating their African heritage. Among black writers such as W.E.B Du Bois, J.A. Rogers and William Leo Hansbery, the period of the Harlem Renaissance was a time of African rediscovery.

Two founding fathers of African democracy, Kwame Nkrumah and Mrandi Azikiwe were profoundly influenced by the Harlem Renaissance. Nkrumah attended UNIA meetings in Harlem during his student days in the United States. In his autobiography, Azikiwe testifies to the influence which Garvey had on his political development. Azikiwe, like Seme, also validated Africa's regeneration by drawing attention to its remarkable past.

In 1937, Azikiwe published a book titled *Renascent Africa* which was another important landmark in this gradual rediscovery of a history that had been forcibly denied and therefore forgotten during the colonial period when massive exploitation of the continent's human and natural resources went hand in hand with a refusal to honour and respect its cultural achievements.

Azikiwe refused to accept that Africa's culture had been blighted forever by the impact of European imperialism and remained focused on achieving moral and social regeneration through the triumph of democracy, ensuring mental emancipation through a rejection of racism and striving for economic

prosperity through self-determination.

During the 1940s and 1950s, many African leaders including our own youth leaders, Nelson Mandela, O.R. Tambo, John Nkademeng and Walter Sisulu also developed African regeneration ideas. The African Renaissance, just like the European Renaissance, was underpinned by humanist principles that President Zuma called upon us to rediscover and make the cornerstone of our desired cohesive, caring and sustainable communities. The African National Congress elevated humanist principles to our national vision by setting the strategic objective of creating a non-racial, no-sexist, united, democratic and prosperous South Africa in which the value of every citizen is measured by our shared humanity. In 1997, our icon, Nelson Mandela observed that African religion has enriched humanity's spiritual heritage through the spirit of Ubuntu, that profound maxim "I am through others or that I am because we are".

The principles of equality, freedom and justice for all that are enshrined in our constitution are inherent in the spiritual philosophy of Ubuntu. Thus, the human rights culture is not a foreign concept but an important part of our cultural heritage and tradition. The African regeneration of Seme is firmly rooted in his assertion "I am an African" which was later



affectionately adopted by former President Thabo Mbeki. Accordingly, African regeneration is founded on the idea of a cultural and economic rebirth and renewal based on Africa's extraordinary history of past achievements especially with reference to Africa's cultural heritage. The beginning of our rebirth and renewal as a country and as a continent must not only be centred on recovery of our humanity, but also on our past glories.

In his speech in Tunisia in the early 1990s, Nelson Mandela lamented the destruction of the African city of Carthage by the Romans and foregrounded other African achievements symbolized by the monuments of Axum in Ethiopia and Great Zimbabwe. Here at home we have heritage sites such as Mapungubwe, Lwandali, Thulamela, Nahakwe, Ga-Radistwene, Ntsoanatsatsi, rock art paintings of the San and others which share the same cosmology, history and heritage with all indigenous cultures of Southern Africa and North East Africa. We have diminished heritages and languages such as Isipondo, Khelobedu, Isintwana and Northern Ndebele which could throw light on and deepen African cultural unity in diversity. The President's support for cultural, religious and linguistic communities will assure, in particular, traditional authorities that they are an integral part of the mainstream society.

Historically, our human values have been derived from our national identity and heritage. Our quest for service delivery must be informed by our values for human development underpinned by an aspect of who we are as people. This calls for the promotion of the use of indigenous knowledge systems and languages to achieve our rural development objectives. For example, indigenous spiritual and agricultural calendars are made out of three seasons of four months each. The spring season in September symbolizes the beginning of new life due to the availability of rain and generally

good climatic conditions. Similarly, most religious people celebrate their rebirth and renewal in spring. In September 2008, the President correctly congratulated all faith communities such as African religions, Moslem and Jews who celebrated their new year and reminded us of *Asibuyeleni amasimini* campaign because September is the African new year and beginning of ploughing time. November is usually an environmentally important month when seeds germinate and animals give birth to off-springs. In December, indigenous people often celebrate the harvesting of the first fruits.

The revitalization of these cultural and agricultural festivals are critical for the promotion of rural development, particularly the revival, recovery and cultivation of work ethic as part of our heritage. In April, many religious formations hold their spiritual celebrations whilst indigenous communities also celebrate their spiritual well-being during this time. Initiation schools for indigenous communities usually begin in May which is the same time when most religious formations perform their spiritual practices.

We have sacred spaces such as Motoulong in the Free State which are utilized by Sotho, Zulu and Xhosa speaking people subscribing to apostolic, Zionist and African religions for worship and initiation.

This is a classic example of the convergence of different cultural and religious groups united in diversity.

South Africans and African people in particular have common history and heritage which provides us with the means to create an over-arching South African national identity and cultural unity in diversity.

In our quest to build a non-racial, non-sexist united and democratic South Africa, we should not forget that Africa is the cradle of all humanity that was fragmented and dispersed to different parts of the globe and later returned as

Afrikaners, Indians, Africans and Khoisan to mention but a few. The Mapungubwe and Zimbabwe cosmology history and heritage which have been rediscovered show substantive identity with their ancient Ethiopian, Egyptian and Roman counterparts from which Europe derived its civilization. Working together, both black and white, we can rediscover our cultural unity in diversity and forge an over-arching national identity and common vision.

The recently adopted UNESCO Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage provides a global platform for the regeneration of Africa as well as the rediscovery, preservation and development of diminished heritages and languages.

It is therefore the prerogative of the ANC government and all members of our society to harness commonalities between various cultures in order to build an over-arching culture that unifies and gives us a common identity without compromising our diversity. This justifies the need for a Presidential program on moral and social education which could accelerate the infusion of progressive values in our children. The President has on many occasions called for social education to deepen moral regeneration in our society. Now is the time for this government to consider implementing this. The implementation of our infrastructural development program should also include the rehabilitation of facilities in rural areas, townships and missionary schools so that these could be used as centres for social education and moral regeneration. The endorsement of the ANC Manifesto by a decisive majority of our people signifies confidence on the ANC's vision of promoting humanist principles in its approach towards meeting its key priorities on education, fighting crime, health, job creation and rural development. For instance, when we talk about crime, we must

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FREEDOM CHARTER

Drawing fresh guidance from the Charter

African National Congress Members of Parliament have commemorated the 54th Anniversary of the Freedom Charter during their weekly Caucus meeting on Thursday. The Freedom Charter, which is a guiding document of the ANC, was adopted by the Congress of the People in Kliptown on 26 June 1955.

Its significance does not lie in its fine words, but in the fact that it is a document drawn up by the people themselves.

It is the expression of the collective demands of the people. It embodies their aspirations. Writing in *Sechaba* in 1985, Mzala observed that every demand made by the people, however small the matter, was recorded and collected for consideration by the Congress of the People for inclusion in the Freedom Charter.

“In this way, the Freedom Charter became, not only in principle but also in actuality, the charter of the people, the content of which has its source in their homes, in the factories, mines and rural reserves.

The task of the organisers of the Congress of the People (who were called Freedom Volunteers) was not to write the demands on behalf of the people..., but to collect them and to enlighten the people on the radical changes that such a campaign could make in the South African situation.”

The celebration of the Charter today serves as an occasion to draw from this historic document fresh guidance and renewed dedication to the task which history places on us, of uniting and mobilising all our people and

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progressive democratic forces in our country for the struggle for better life for all.

In drawing up our election Manifesto, we drank from the well of experience of how the Freedom Charter was developed.

In addition, we consulted with all constitutional structures, alliance partners, the broader Mass Democratic Movement and the people in general.

The vision projected by the Freedom Charter continues to inform the work we do in the transformation of our country. In his response to the Presidency Budget Vote in the National Assembly on Thursday, President Jacob Zuma told the House that the Congress of the People, which produced the Freedom Charter, changed the course of this country’s history.

“Today, 54 years later, we are gathered in the National Assembly as representatives of the people of South Africa from all over. Like those delegates that arrived in Kliptown, we have been sent to this Parliament carrying on our shoulders the wishes, hopes and expectations of the people of South Africa.

“In its preamble, the Freedom Charter says:

“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”.

“It captures the fundamental and enduring principle at the heart of our democracy that the People Shall Govern, and underscores the notion of an inclusive society, a country in which all South Africans have a place in the sun.”

In his contribution to the debate on the Presidency Budget Vote, the Chief Whip of the ANC Mathole Motshekga said that the Freedom Charter shaped the ANC’s vision of a post-apartheid South Africa and profoundly influenced the Constitution of the Republic.

“(The Freedom Charter) was the product of unity and co-operation of the kind that President Zuma spoke about.

The first and the only congress of the people on South African soil inherited and propagated revolutionary morality and values of the cohesive and caring society.”

Dissolution of the SABC Board

The portfolio committee on communications on Friday unanimously decided to dissolve the Board of the South African Broadcasting Corporation in line with Section 15 of the Broadcasting Act. In terms of Section 15, the National Assembly may, after due inquiry and by the adoption of a resolution, recommend the dissolution of the Board on the grounds of, amongst others, failure to discharge its fiduciary duties. The committee will formally table its decision to the sitting of the National Assembly on 1 July for discussion and possible adoption, before it is sent as a recommendation to the President. ANC Members of Parliament will support the adoption of the committee's decision. The committee has found amongst others that the SABC was in a state of a crisis in terms of its finances and a breakdown in corporate governance. The institution reported a financial loss of R839 million for the 2008/09 financial year as a result of declining revenue and unrestrained over

expenditure – resulting in the current severe cash flow crisis. The committee also found that lack of operational chemistry and deep-seated tensions between members of the SABC Board and the executive management contributed to the current crisis faced by the public broadcaster. Also taking into consideration the appeal made by the Board in the last day of the inquiry calling upon Parliament to dissolve it, the committee was unanimous in its view that the Board was in no position to dispense its duties. It has always been our view that, in the interest of this important national asset and the people of South Africa, an urgent intervention was necessary to cure the SABC of its current deep-rooted problems. Parliament will now, after the President had assented to the recommendation, move swiftly to appoint the interim Board in line with the Broadcasting Act while a process of seeking candidates for the new Board is embarked upon. In terms of the Act, the interim Board must serve for a period not exceeding six months.

New appointments

The ANC Parliamentary Caucus recently appointed Whips in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). They are:

- **Daphne Rantho** – Eastern Cape Provincial Whip
- **Mbuyiselo Jacobs** – Free State Provincial Whip
- **Dan Montsitsi** – Gauteng Provincial Whip
- **Lewis Nzimande** – KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Whip
- **Livhuhani Mabija** – Limpopo Provincial Whip
- **Grace Boroto** – Mpumalanga Provincial Whip
- **Edwin Chaane** – North West Provincial Whip
- **George Mokgoro** – Northern Cape Provincial Whip
- **Sam Mazosiwe**: Programming Whip
- **Daphne Rantho, Sam Mazosiwe**: Duty Whips
- **Mbuyiselo Jacobs**: Transport Whip
- **Dan Montsitsi**: Leave & Discipline Whip
- **Livhuhani Mabija, Edwin Chaane**: Housing Whips
- **Grace Boroto, Lewis Nzimande**: Resources Whips
- **George Mokgoro**: Questions & Motions Whip

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not focus solely on the police and courts, but we should also emphasize social education at childhood which would assist young people to be responsible citizens of good moral standing. It is in this context that Seme and Garvey's ideas of the regeneration of Africa and Africans remains relevant in guiding the partnership for Reconstruction, Development and Progress that was announced in the President's inaugural address.

This partnership provides all of us, both black and white, with an opportunity to work together not only for the rediscovery of our humanity but also for holistic development including spiritual and material human development.

The National Interfaith Leaders' Movement born out of the inclusive approach to social cohesion and nation building has endorsed the idea of holistic human development and are ready to be part of this important partnership. The Presidency Budget has demonstrated the President's quest and that of the ANC to create decent jobs, provide quality and affordable health & education, develop rural areas and create cohesive, caring and sustainable communities is part of an integrated and comprehensive plan to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, both black and white. Members of Parliament are acutely aware that the President has criss-crossed the length and

breadth of our country to seek a common mandate and invited all South Africans to participate in the development of the ANC Manifesto. His plan is therefore a product of wide consultation and working together with people from different sectors of our society. Hence, the decisive victory that the people of South Africa gave him and the ANC to lead and build a government which is interactive and responsive to promote the common good of the nation as a whole is understandable. A nation rooted in the spiritual, moral and social values of the founders of our democracy.

■ **Motshekga is the Chief Whip of the ANC in Parliament**