



ANC Whip

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AFRICA DAY Proud of our past, confident of our future

by MATHOLE MOTSHEKGA

Monday, the 25 May, is known by Africans throughout the continent of Africa and in Diaspora as Africa Day.

It is a day when the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the precursor to the African Union (AU), was formed in 1963 and also marks the adoption of its Charter.

Africa Day celebrates and acknowledge the progress that we, as Africans, have made, while reflecting upon the common challenges we face in a global environment.

Beyond this, the Day provides us with the opportunity to celebrate our African identity and achievements. For us, as Africans, Africa Day means that our entire continent has an opportunity to join together in a united affirmation of our confidence in ourselves, and our future.

This sense of common African identity was reinforced by the positions independent Africa took from the very start, that no African country could be genuinely free until all African countries secured their liberation.

At the forefront of this perspective were important African leaders

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such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, King Mohamed V of Morocco, Modibo Keita of Mali, Abdel Gamal Nasser of Egypt, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, Sekou Toure of Guinea, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and Ahmed Ben Bella of Algeria to mention but a few.

These leaders of Africa made history and gave significant impetus to the continent's collective struggle for independence by establishing the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), in which African states stood united, while making efforts to give depth and meaning to their political independence and strive for the socio-economic development of their people. Through the OAU Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, the Continent worked and spoke as one with undivided determination in forging an international consensus in

support of the liberation struggle and the fight against apartheid. Today as South Africans we are free, we walk tall in the land of our birth, today we are respected world over as a major international player in the affairs of the world because of the sacrifices that fellow Africans from the continent and in Diaspora made for us to attain our freedom.

The events of yesteryear are a blot on our efforts to make a contribution for a better Africa and a just world.

All of us should make a solemn commitment that for the remaining time of our lives we will work tirelessly for the upholding of human rights.

As South Africans we should work for a continent of democracy, peace and security. It must become a truly welcoming home for all its peoples, regardless of race, colour, ethnicity or religion.



Our continent must become a place of prosperity and human upliftment. Africa must become a continent of great learning and rich cultural expression.

It must become a continent of freedom for women, happiness for the children, respect and support for the disabled and the elderly. The African National Congress throughout its history of existence, amongst others, has set itself the task of working for securing peace and friendship amongst all people by upholding equal rights and status for all. The ANC will therefore double its efforts to achieve greater unity and solidarity among the African states and the people of Africa; to accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent; promote and defend common positions on issues of African interest; promote peace, security and stability on the continent; establish conditions necessary to enable the continent to become a recognised player in the global political economy; and coordinate and harmonise the policies between existing and future regional economic communities.

Initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) provide a blueprint and a programme for coordinated progress across the different states of Africa in crucial areas of social and economic development.

The African people, with their aspirations and collective determination, are the most important resource.

The implementation of NEPAD Programme should focus on our people's most immediate needs, and rely, in turn, on their energies to drive the process of meeting these needs.

Africa has the best possibility in this milieu to emerge from an era of political and social decline into a renaissance of hope and social progress

Regardless of race or sex, or whether they are rural or urban, rich or poor, the people of Africa must together shape their own future.

Development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry. It is about active involvement and growing empowerment. The recent turmoil in world markets, and before that, sharp rises in the cost of fuel and food, has impacted negatively on the economies of African states and the lives of our people as it has done throughout the world. The cost of living has increased painfully and we can expect economic growth to slowdown, resulting in job losses.

The current global economic meltdown will negatively affect our efforts to rejuvenate our continent through NEPAD programme. Subsequently, all eight of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), agreed by the United Nations in 2000, will not be achieved by the developing nations and in particular by those in Africa by 2015.

Therefore the ANC will work together with progressive forces in the continent, such as labour, business and other sectors to develop practical solutions that will ensure that in the short, medium and long term economic prospects continue to improve and that jobs losses are avoided or minimised.

In 1906, one of the founding fathers of the African National Congress, Pixley Ka Isaka Seme, speaking of the African determination to be free, says: "The African already recognizes his anomalous position and desires a change.

"The brighter day is rising upon Africa. Already I seem to see her chains dissolved; her desert plains red with harvest; her Abyssinia and her Zululand the seats of science and religion, reflecting the glory of the rising sun from the spires of their churches and universities, her Congo and her Gambia whitened with commerce; her crowded cities sending forth the hum of business; and all her sons employed in advancing the victories of peace—greater and more abiding than the spoils of war".

Africa has the best possibility in this milieu to emerge from an era of political and social decline into a renaissance of hope and social progress.

It can on a massive scale turn adversity into opportunity.

A new spirit is abound on the continent, and the people of Africa are determined to use their newly-harnessed energy, pride and self-assertiveness to chart their own course of development and extricate themselves from the lowest rungs of human development.

The ANC calls on all Africans to rise as one and march together for lasting peace, integration and development on our continent. Acting in unison, we can build a better Africa and a just World.

■ *Motshekga is the Chief Whip of the African National Congress in Parliament*

ANC MPs must hold government to account

African National Congress MPs serving in the fourth democratic Parliament can not afford to turn a blind eye when Cabinet Ministers and high-ranking government officials fail to deliver, ANC President Jacob Zuma said.

Addressing newly-elected MPs at the ANC's first Caucus meeting held in the Old Assembly on 14 May, the ANC President made it clear that past practices where ruling party MPs shied away from criticizing the executive, should be a thing of the past.

"MPs must not be user-friendly to the Executive, especially those not delivering – Parliament has a serious role to play to ensure that government delivers.

The ANC President, whose arrival at the venue was met with ululations and cheering from Caucus staff and Parliament officials, reminded ruling party MPs about the immense trust which South Africans had placed on the ANC.

He said the only way the ANC could acknowledge the massive support it received from South Africans, was through demonstrating that it was capable of handling the affairs of the country in a proper manner.

"It is the manner in which the ANC operates that the people will continue to have confidence in the {party}," he said.

Unacceptable habits, where Cabinet Ministers treated MPs with contempt, should now come to an end, the ANC President said.

"The Chief Whip must act on such tendencies because the ANC has a duty to serve the people of this country," he said. Cabinet Ministers should at all times show great respect for Parliamentary structures,

including committees and study groups.

Newly-appointed ANC Chief Whip, Mathole Motshekga concurred with the President, saying the ruling party Parliamentary leadership had a duty to act against Cabinet

Cabinet Ministers should at all times show great respect for Parliamentary structures, including committees and study groups

ministers who fail to appear in Parliament as required by law. Motshekga, who addressed the media following Caucus's inaugural meeting, told reporters that the ANC would take necessary measures to ensure that old habits, where ANC MPs treated Cabinet ministers with soft gloves, came to an end.

"Now is the time to do things differently so that we can speed up delivery to our people," he said.

Motshekga, who is also a member of the ANC National Executive Committee, made it clear that the attitude of ruling party MPs should be informed by the need to serve the public..

He said Caucus had a responsibility to ensure that government delivers on promises made by the ruling party to citizens.

"Our primary responsibility is to serve all South Africans," he said.

ANC Secretary General Gwede Mantashe, who shared the stage with Motshekga at the press briefing, said the ruling ANC would be reviewing its public representative evaluation system. "We are reviewing the evaluation of public representatives. There is agreement that it should be an annual exercise instead of linking it to the full term.

"Our link person will be the Chief Whips, who will in return use their network to ensure that assessment is effective," he said. The Secretary General said that the evaluation would cover the effectiveness in parliamentary work, the political work that public representatives are involved in, and the service rendered in the constituencies.

He said the ruling party will ensure that MPs undertook meaningful work in their various constituencies.

In his election campaign trail, Zuma told masses that strict monitoring and evaluation systems would be put in place to monitor the performance of the government.

The ANC President made it clear that the new government will not tolerate laziness and incompetence.

His speech to new ANC MPs, the subsequent statements by the Chief Whip and the Secretary General, is proof that the ruling party was determined to remove all obstacles hindering delivery.

It is also a clear sign that the ANC does not take lightly the overwhelming mandate it received from South Africans.