

The African National Congress Youth League Perspective on Gender Relations and Women's Emancipation

Discussion Paper prepared for the 24th National Congress of the ANC Youth League, June 2011

A. Introduction

1. Discussions about unequal power relations between men and women in a society that largely favours the former have been abundant in our movement. However, these have often been subsumed under broad discussions on social and economic transformation. It is in this regard that a critique has been levelled at us, accusing us of treating the question of women's oppression under a patriarchal society as "a bit on the side",¹ "or an "optional extra". Many a times, the revolutionary movement has been accused of calling on women to "hold their tongues" until a defeat of apartheid was secured. Moreover, those strongly advocating for a radical focus on gender relations have easily earned the label of being sectarian and not advancing the interests of the people as a whole.
2. Here we seek to trace the gender discourse within the ANCYL, the history of struggles against women's oppression within league structures as well as carving out specific campaigns that the league should be embarking upon in order to challenge the domination of women in a patriarchal society. There is recognition that members of the ANCYL are a product of a society characterised by class oppression, racial discrimination as well as patriarchal domination. As a result, the organisation does not stand above many of the problems that confront us in society. As members of the ANCYL, we are in one way or another affected by patriarchy – as beneficiaries and victims of it. It is for this reason that a greater part of this paper focuses on the need to build an ANCYL that is gender conscious and well armed to fight gender struggles in society. This inward looking approach is devised to ensure that we emerge out of the 24th National Congress better placed to advance campaigns that mobilise young women around their practical gender needs as well as ensuring that we challenge patriarchy by making radical gender reforms and demands on the state. In order to achieve this, we proceed to clarify a few concepts.
3. Patriarchy is a system of male domination. Under such a system, women occupy subordinate positions. Such dominance is evident in many aspects of life including the economy, the family, the church, in culture etc. Thus predominantly when we speak of gender relations, we are referring to a power relation defined by inequality between the sexes and the gender roles ascribed to each. There is an argument that the term gender oppression should be used instead of women's oppression as the gender struggle involves both men and women. This obscures the fundamental issue. The term gender oppression neutralises the question of domination and masks the unequal way in which men and women relate in a patriarchal society. Gender is a useful analytical category; however, it can be misinterpreted and misused in order to maintain the status quo. Gender relations are about women's subordination and male domination. There is a need for a deeper

¹ Beall, J, Hassim, S and Todes, A, " 'A Bit on the Side'? – Gender Struggle in the Politics of Transformation in South Africa", *Feminist Review*, No.33, 1989, pp.30-56.

understanding of these power relations and how they are maintained in both direct and indirect ways. This does not mean that all men benefit in the same and equal ways out of the system. Men of different ages, races, class and even sexual orientation have different subjective experiences with the system in much the same way that women of different ages, races, classes and sexualities do. This being the case, the common denominator is that the relations between genders under patriarchy are defined by subordination of women and domination by men. Raising cautions about differential incorporation is useful in that it reminds us to steer clear of essentialising women's oppression

4. At the same time, the use of the concept "women's oppression" must seek to elevate women from the status of victimhood into agents of change. Used in a de-contextualised form, the latter can pigeonhole women's struggles and completely divorce it from struggles against other forms of oppression. Clearly a nuanced perspective on gender would strike a balance between the two, ensuring that the struggle against women's oppression is not divorced from the struggle against racial oppression and class exploitation whilst at the same time not treating gender as a side issue.

B. Gender Discourse and Practice within the National Liberation Movement

5. Debates about women's oppression have long been discussed within the revolutionary movement. In the early 20th century, it was the Bantu Women's League (and later the ANC WL) that called for the emancipation of women and strongly advocated for women to be accorded equal qualification for membership of the African National Congress. Before this period, women's participation in the ANC was in the form of an auxiliary membership. The role of such membership was to entertain and provide shelter for those who held full membership of the ANC at that time – men. A breakthrough was made in 1943 - a year before the ANCYL came into being - when women were given full membership rights and responsibilities in the ANC.² This commitment on paper did not however immediately translate into reality. There remained for instance a blind approach towards women's needs within the organisation. This was more so when it came to women's needs and responsibilities as political creatures and as mothers expected to care for and rear children – duties and responsibilities bestowed upon women by the patriarchal system.
6. Also noteworthy is that the national liberation movement during this time mobilised women around the symbolism of motherhood and nationalism. Accordingly, colonial domination and apartheid were albatrosses on women's necks precisely because they hindered and made it more difficult for women to perform their patriarchal duties as mothers and wives. Most analysis points to the fact that women also perceived their roles within the discourse of motherhood. To understand this means that we must appreciate that the women's struggle was seen as part and parcel of the struggle against national domination and class exploitation. This means that oftentimes the attempts to advance the question of gender equality and raise the levels of consciousness around it were seen as influenced largely by Western feminism and ideology which had little resonance for movements operating within the peculiarities of apartheid South Africa. This largely limited the extent to which women's organisation within the national liberation fold, inclusive of the ANCWL, could legitimately raise issues related to sexuality, reproductive rights and bodily integrity. Many of these demands, which have now become central to

² See Ginwala, F, *Women and the African National Congress- 1912-1943*, Umrabulo, No. 13, Fourth Quarter 2001.

the women's movement, were seen as non political and as a distraction against the key struggle, which was the overthrow of apartheid.

7. This is not a trans-historical experience as the ANC in exile became increasingly sensitive to some of the demands of women. For one, attempts were made to frame gender equality demands as part and parcel of the political demands of the struggle. This is largely due to the fact that the ANC Women's Section in exile became increasingly radical and transformed from a 'social worker' that focused on the social problems affecting women and children in exile to more directly articulating the need for the mobilisation of women in pursuit of the struggle for gender equality. The fact that gender equality became understood as a corner stone of a democratic vision is proof of the successes of these endeavours.³
8. Debates about women's oppression also found resonance within the youth movement. In the late 1980s the gendered nature of our organisations and the extent to which patriarchy has played a major role in the marginalisation of women within the organisation became topical within the structures of the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO) the ANCYL's forerunner. Febe Potgieter's paper, tracing the organisation's treatment of women's oppression makes the observation that the manner in which the leadership question was handled largely favoured men and no forms of affirmative tools were in place to assist women to climb up the largely male dominated positions.⁴
9. Before its incorporation into the ANCYL, SAYCO had made some inroads and attempts to address this skewed situation. In the late 1980s, an affirmative policy was introduced in SAYCO which stipulated that delegations to its decision-making structures – especially regional and national structures- should always include women. Although some of SAYCO's regions had vibrant and active women's subcommittees, it was difficult to assess whether such a strategy worked in making the organisation a home for young women or not. However, Potgieter strongly argues that there was a direct correlation between this prescription about a gender balanced delegation to congresses and the fact that SAYCO's last congress before incorporation saw the election of four women to the National Executive Committee, something that was preceded by a women's caucus in the same congress.⁵
10. The success of this strategy could be judged by the fact that the abandonment of this policy in the 1992 ANCYL Congress where women formed only a fraction of the total delegation (150 women delegates out of 1600 total) resulted in only one woman elected to the National Executive Committee. A strong resistance was also waged by male comrades and the now too familiar argument that "people must be elected on the basis of capacity" took root.⁶ What is instructive about SAYCO's approach, despite its minimalist nature, is that there was recognition that women must be present and visible within organisational spaces in order to change political organisations and make them responsive to their needs. This notwithstanding, there is little evidence to point to the fact that this milestone translated into programmes and campaigns aimed at challenging patriarchy

³ See Hassim, S, Voices, Hierarchies and Spaces: Reconfiguring the Women's Movement in Democratic South Africa, www.ccs.ukzn.ac.za, 2004, p.10.

⁴ Potgieter, F, "A Voice for Young Women", Agenda, No.20, 1994, pp. 30-35.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., p.33.

within the male dominated SAYCO nor is there proof that the organisation became more friendly to women's interests.⁷

11. One of the pointers to this failure is the manner in which sexual harassment was handled within SAYCO. Despite the progress made in terms of the gender prescription on delegation to decision-making structures, sexual harassment as an issue warranting discussion and resolution was scorned at and seen as carrying the potential to divide the organisation. An observation is made that "when (after reports of sexual harassment at Congress) the SAYCO Women's Desk produced a paper to be presented to the NEC in 1990, there was an outrage from male NEC members. The paper was never discussed in any structure nor was it even circulated."⁸ Inadvertently, there were no campaigns undertaken to address the problem.
12. Later, the same discussion took place within the ANCYL and even here it was subjected to lengthy debates. The dominant line of argument was that sexual harassment is a divisive issue and its integration into the leadership code would result in the false accusation of men. These debates reflected the dominance of men as little attention was given to women at the receiving end of sexual harassment, as victims who would be in need of recourse within the organisation. Before 1996, the perspective that prevailed was that sexual harassment clause needs to be qualified, something odd given that many of our clauses on leadership are not subject to the same qualification. This was not an issue peculiar to the youth league as the youth movement during this period was paralysed by the same analysis.
13. Two major breakthroughs have since been made in the terrain of gender relations within the organisation. The first breakthrough was the classification of sexual harassment as a bridge of the Code of Conduct. The persistent problem of sexual harassment was given full legislative attention in 19th National Congress wherein a clause in the constitution was adopted making sexual harassment a grave offence. This was a clear demonstration of the ANCYL's commitment to the struggle against sexism at all levels of the organisation. Accordingly, the constitution also states that the persistent sowing of sexism as well as sexually assaulting and harassing, whether verbally or physically of women or children shall be intolerable acts within the organisation.⁹ This provision in our constitution is a progressive step forward as it makes sexual harassment an organisational issue rather than an individual private matter.
14. The second breakthrough was the adoption of a gender quota as a means to enhance the representation of women in our structures. This has slowly progressed from 40% in 2004 to 50% in 2008. It should be noted that although the 2004 Constitution stipulated that women representation shall be 40% in all structures, it also stated that representation to all ANCYL activities shall be based in 50/50 gender parity.¹⁰ These along with many other advances on gender equality have led many to conclude that "few other national liberation movements or political parties globally have incorporated notions of gender equality to the extent that the ANC has done."¹¹

⁷ *Ibid*, p.33-34.

⁸ *Ibid*, p.34.

⁹ ANCYL Constitution, 1996.

¹⁰ ANCYL Constitutions 2004 and 2008 respectively

¹¹ Hassim, S, *Voices, Hierarchies and Spaces: Reconfiguring the Women's Movement in Democratic South Africa*, www.ccs.ukzn.ac.za, 2004, p.8.

C. Contemporary issues relating to Women's Oppression under Patriarchy

i. *Women's Economic and Social Oppression under patriarchy*

15. It is undeniable that the position of women under democracy and ANC rule has significantly improved. Women have acquired greater representation in parliament; various legislation has also been introduced to ensure the equal participation of women in the workplace and in society. The ANC government has also played a critical role in fostering gender equality in the Southern African region as evidenced by the adoption of the SADC Gender Protocol which commits the region to a no less than 50% quota for women in all decision making structures in countries of the region by 2015.¹² Indeed under the ANC government, South Africa fares quite well in terms of women representation, ranking third in the world in terms of women representation in legislative bodies. This far surpasses the 19% global average.¹³
16. Despite this, gender oppression manifests itself in society in various ways. Men and women experience this oppression in gendered ways. It must be emphasised that although gender relations in our patriarchal society give men dominance and privilege, men also simultaneously experience the pressure of having to conform to rigid gender roles and expectations. Men of different races, class, age etc have differing experiences with patriarchy. Similarly, the subjective experience of rural black women under patriarchy is different to the experience of white urban women. Due to obvious historical and contemporary reasons the former is most harshly oppressed by the system of patriarchy. In the same vein, rich white men reap more benefits under a racialised, patriarchal capitalist order than the black working class men who work for or under them.
17. It is widely accepted that neoliberal development trajectory has disproportionately affected the poor in our society. This is evidenced by the rise in unemployment; growth of atypical jobs; the downsizing of the public sector, restructuring and privatisation of massive state owned enterprises accompanied by the commercialisation of public and basic municipal services. These structural changes imposed several costs on the South African working class, in particular the black working class residing in townships and informal settlements.
18. Neoliberal policies have also magnified apartheid's legacy of massive income inequalities between racial groups in South Africa. Mass unemployment continues to haunt many black families leading to a depletion of family income and the quality of services offered by the democratic state in many of our municipalities remains dreadful. Amenities such as schools, clinics, libraries and recreation facilities in black townships are still lamentable. To add to this misery, the apartheid spatial location continues to place pressure on the black

¹² See Mthintso, T, *The Revolution within the Revolution*, [ANC Today](#), 30 August 2010.

¹³ Inter-Parliamentary Union, January 2011, www.ipu.org. South Africa is third to Rwanda (first) and Sweden (second)

working class wage as transport expenditure is far higher than that spent by whites.¹⁴ The slow pace of land restitution means that we are still haunted by the reality of apartheid cities characterised by apartheid's spatial concentration of employment, growth and infrastructural investment. This stifles the efforts of the democratic state to deliver services to the poor and further reinforces apartheid's racial segregation with class overtones.

19. Women particularly young black working class women have been adversely affected by the discourse and practice of a slim state. The withdrawal of the state from the provision of basic services, as propagated by the neoliberal ideology, has left women with additional burdens and responsibilities. This is more so as it is women who have suffered under the wrath of privatisation of public services and global reduction in social spending. The neoliberal emphasis on curtailing social spending has directly undercut the struggle for the public provision of childcare facilities and parental benefit whilst the liberalisation of our economy has made many sectors in which women are concentrated vulnerable to global pressures and competition.
20. Research shows that women, in particular those located in rural parts of the country, are most disadvantaged by the crisis of unemployment. Many studies identify a common reality that women are more likely to be unemployed; to be paid less than men when employed; to be located in sectors that are related to their domestic duties at home (cleaning services, catering, textile and clothing); and to perform unpaid labour.¹⁵ Women currently form the bulk of informal, flexible, casual and atypical labour in the country. Poverty is also feminised as most poor households are female-headed. Additionally, most of the labour undertaken by women remains unpaid and confined to the domestic sphere.
21. The neoliberal development trajectory as precipitated by GEAR has also created a crisis of endemic proportions for both young and old working class women in South Africa in terms of health. Poor women continue to be the hands and feet of a home based care system that often pays little regard to their economic needs. Women's health, especially reproductive health needs have also been setback by the neoliberal emphasis on the curtailing of social spending.
22. As a result, despite the noble commitments made by the revolutionary movement, in reality, many women languish in public hospitals because of late detection of diseases such as breast cancer and a shortage of cancer treatments such as chemotherapy.
23. Although women of all races and geographical location are susceptible to breast cancer, rural African women are most affected by this scourge due to inaccessibility of medical

¹⁴ Ruiters, G, *Municipal Crisis Premonitions* in Bond, P (ed), *Cities of Gold, Townships of Coal*, p.336.

¹⁵ Seidman-Makgetla, N. *Women and the Economy*, 2004, Paper prepared for the Genderstats project. www.womensnet.org.za/genderstats/economy

centres with oncology services; cultural misconceptions; as well as negative attitudes adopted towards therapeutic methods such as radiotherapy and chemotherapy.¹⁶

24. There is also evidence that the current government policy around cervical cancer and Pap smears is not sufficiently targeting South African women. We should be extremely concerned about this as the ANCYL as this cancer is increasingly encroaching amongst young women. Many problems haunt the administration of Pap smears to women including availability, access and education. Indeed many women in South Africa remain in the dark about their gynaecological options and these services remain highly expensive and are a preserve of a few women who can afford private medical schemes.¹⁷

25. Young women who depend on the Child Support Grant (CSG) as their only means of income are vilified in the public discourse, depicted as lazy and unwilling to roll up their sleeves and engage in productive employment. It is argued that poor young women deliberately fall pregnant in order to access the CSG. As a chief campaigner for the increase of the age of those who can access the CSG, we have eschewed from many of these wrong assumptions and continued to defend the rights of both the children and the caregivers to access the CSG.

26. Currently, there is no research signalling a correlation between the CSG and the rate of early motherhood.¹⁸ Instead, research points to the fact that this intervention by the democratic state has aided the situation of children and parents who would otherwise be destitute. We should also bear in mind that such arguments are underpinned by a liberal logic that scorns “dependency”, forgetting that it is the capitalist system that fosters dependence as it takes away all means of production away from the worker and leaves him/her with no other option but to sell her labour power. With a high unemployment rate such as ours, many people cannot engage in productive employment and hence are forcefully made “dependent” by a system that fails to provide for everyone, especially working class women.

27. This depressing reality confirms a simple fact - Young black women continue to lurch under the burdens of a system of male domination, the legacy of apartheid as well as rampant neoliberal capitalism.

28. Although the experience of economic oppression is gendered, this should not be misconstrued to mean that men have been left unscathed by this process. As an example, the spate of retrenchments and the resulting unemployment has made it more difficult for men to conform to their patriarchal gender roles as “providers” and “breadwinners”. This leads to a variety of problems on the part of the affected males including suicide

¹⁶ Vorobiof, D et al, Breast Cancer Incidence in South Africa, Journal of Oncology, Vol.19., No.18, September 2001.

¹⁷ Lynch, K, “The Womb People”: Detection, Treatment and Prevention of Cervical Cancer with the Khayelitsha Cervical Cancer Screening Project.

¹⁸ See Makiwane, M and Udjo, E, The Child Support Grant and Teenage Fertility in South Africa, HSRC Report-Child, Youth, Family and Social Development, December 2006, www.hsrc.ac.za

(including family killings), involvement in crime as a survival strategy and domestic abuse which is meted out on women and children in the home.

ii. Sexual Violence, Rape and Homophobic Violence

29. Sexual violence is but one of the ways in which men assert their power and dominance over women in a patriarchal society. In our country, we are confronted by high incidence of violence against women, including but not limited to rape. Statistics reveal that South Africa has one of the highest rates of violence against women in the world. Violence against women (although disproportionately affecting young working class women because of unequal access to education, economic resources, security and justice) actually cuts across racial, geographic and class lines.
30. Rape is a crisis of epidemic proportions in South Africa. Official police statistics reveal the following in terms of rape reporting:
- 69117 cases of rape were reported for the years in 2004/5
 - 68076 cases were reported in 2005/6,
 - 65201 in 2006/7,
 - 63818 in 2007/8 and
 - 71500 cases of rape were reported in 2008/9.¹⁹
31. Gender activists have pointed out that these figures are modest at best and laden with problems such as under-reporting, corruption, codification of crimes and lack of disaggregated data.
32. Different studies show that most rape (88%) in South Africa is unreported. The reasons for this are varied, ranging from embarrassment, stigmatisation, self-blame and fear of victimisation.²⁰ These studies also reveal that the rate of sexualised violence is actually higher than what official statistics suggest. These studies reveal the extent to which young women in South Africa are disproportionately affected by sexual violence. Amongst the findings are that:

¹⁹ <http://www.saps.gov.za/statistics/reports/crimestat/2008/march_april_2001_2008/category/rape.pdf>

²⁰ Ursula Lau *Intimate Partner Violence Fact Sheet*, <http://www.mrc.ac.za/crime/intimatepartner.pdf>

- Many young women experience their first sexual encounter through coercion. More than 25% of women between the ages of 16-20 have been forced to have sex against their will. A Love Life study conducted in 2000 reveals that almost 40% of young girls between the ages of 12 and 17 had been forced to have sex; 33% of girls in this age group were afraid to say 'no' and 55% agree to have sex upon the insistence of their partner even though they really don't want to.²¹
- Another study found that 45% of women aged 14 – 24 described their first sexual experience to have been one where they had been coerced - persuaded, tricked, forced or raped²²
- more than 40% of women interviewed in a Cape Town study had experienced one sexual assault²³
- 27.6% of men interviewed in a Medical Research Council study admitted having raped a woman, while 14.3% had raped a current or ex-girlfriend or wife. Nearly half of the men who said they had raped, had raped more than one woman or girl²⁴
- A 1999 study conducted in three South African provinces found that 27% of women in the Eastern Cape, 28% of women in Mpumalanga and 19% of women in the Limpopo had been physically abused in their lifetimes by a current or ex-partner and 51% of women in the Eastern Cape, 50% in Mpumalanga and 40% in Limpopo had experienced emotional and financial abuse in the year prior to the study²⁵
- Teenage girls whose first sexual encounter was coerced were 14 times more likely to fall pregnant than girls whose first encounter had been consensual.²⁶
- Intimate femicide research found that every six hours a woman is killed by her male partner, revealing one of the highest rates ever reported in research anywhere in the world²⁷

33. Sexual violence against lesbian women and gay men is one of the silent crimes that take place repeatedly in South Africa. Homophobia is culturally sanctioned discrimination

²¹ LoveLife, *Hot Prospects. Cold Facts*. Colourpress Ltd: South Africa, 2000.

²² Hallman, K., *Sexual Violence and Girls Education in South Africa*. Available online at: <https://paa2005.princeton.edu/download.aspx?submissionId=51448>, 2005.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Jewkes, R., Sikweyiya, Y., Morrell, R., Dunkle, K, *Understanding Men's Health and Use of Violence: Interface of Rape and HIV in South Africa*. Medical Research Council Policy Brief: Pretoria, 2009.

²⁵ Jewkes, R, Penn-Kekana, L, Levin, J, Ratsaka, M and Schrieber, M, *He must give me money, he mustn't beat me.: Violence against women in three South African Provinces*. Pretoria: CERSA (Women's Health) Medical Research Council, 1999.

²⁶ Jewkes, R., Vundule, C., Maforah, F., Jordan, E, "Relationship dynamics and teenage pregnancy in South Africa", *Social Science & Medicine*, 52:733, 2001.

²⁷ Mathews, S, Abrahams, N, Martin, L., Vetten, L, van der Merwe, L and Jewkes, R, *Every six hours a woman is killed by her intimate partner: A National Study of Female Homicide in South Africa*. MRC Policy brief no. 5, June 2004.

against gays and lesbians in the country. It is an assertion of heterosexuality which poses heterosexual behaviour as the only natural and acceptable behaviour. Homosexuality challenges established norms and culture about gender roles and expectations. Justifications for homophobia include notions about the “un-Africaness” and ungodly nature of homosexuality.

34. Even though our country bars discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual orientation, homosexual people continue to suffer from a range of abuses and victimisation. Studies reveal that the fear of victimisation is higher amongst African lesbian females than their white counterparts. Most victimisation of African homosexuals takes place in public spaces such as main roads, parks, taxi ranks and train stations whereas whites suffer victimisation mostly at the workplace, at home and night clubs and pubs.
35. One of the most worrying developments that were placed on the spotlight after the rape and murder of South African women’s national football player Eudy Simelane is the phenomenon of “corrective rape”. Statistics reveal that since 1998, 39 murders of lesbian women have been reported but only one of these resulted in a conviction. This number is dominated by young, black, working class women. Despite this reality, many gay rights activists decry the fact that crimes of this nature are still not classified as hate crimes and that this impeded any attempts to mete out harsh sentences against offenders. State institutions as well as political organisations such as our own often have a limp wisted response, eschewing public condemnation of such acts. There is also a marked split between those organisations working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and intersex (LGBT) and those working on violence against women.

iii. Sex Work and Women’s Oppression

36. Women who are involved in sex work are extremely vulnerable to violence and victimisation both from the state and their male clients. This vulnerability is fostered by the criminalisation of sex work, which results in sex worker’s reluctance to report rape, mainly due to fear of secondary victimisation and insensitive treatment from the police. The criminalisation of sex work does not serve as a deterrent but rather leads to covert operation which in itself increases the propensity for victimisation and abuse of sex workers. The persistent stigma and discrimination against sex workers significantly hampers access to crucial health services.

iv. The Intersection between Violence against Women and HIV and AIDS

37. The intersection between violence against women and the risks of HIV/AIDS are now well documented and recognised. Sexualised violence increases the risk of women contracting HIV/AIDS. Conversely, women with HIV/AIDS are also at a greater risk of suffering from sexual violence. Low levels of rape reporting also contributes to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS as many of these women cannot access the necessary health services, including the crucial preventative post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) treatment. Moreover, services to women who have been raped are often inadequate, gender insensitive and inaccessible. Women’s lack of autonomy in terms of HIV/AIDS preventative contraceptive use (condoms) is a good example of the prevailing unequal power relations between men and

women in our society. The inadequate distribution of male condoms as well as their poor quality accompanied by the fact that the female condom fails to win the use of many women exacerbates this reality. The following has been revealed in terms of the intricate link between sexual violence and HIV/AIDS:

- A study conducted at an antenatal clinic in Soweto found that women with violent or controlling male partners are at increased risk of HIV infection.²⁸ Infertility, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections are other recorded consequences²⁹
- Women infected with HIV are routinely subject to violence due to stigma and discrimination both due to their gender, *as well as* their HIV status³⁰
- Women living with HIV and AIDS are at increased risk of violence from partners and family members.³¹

v. Cultural and Religious Practices and Women's Oppression

38. The persistence of backwards cultural and religious practices that undermine women's rights in the democratic period is yet another confirmation of the need to take the struggle for women's emancipation to new heights. Women are still oppressed by cultural practices which although recognised by the constitution, patently undermine women's rights. Without dwelling into an in depth discussion on this, cultural practices such as polygamy, forced marriages and virginity testing³² tend to affirm the rights to cultural and religious freedom over and above the right to equality. Some of these practices affect most brutally young women. Reports on young women being abducted and forced into marriage, sometimes with the sanction of their impoverished parents are now too familiar. These practices highlight how the economic oppression of women curtails their choices and makes them vulnerable to a whole range of practices that undermine their right to dignity. These realities point to the fact that it is crucial that we infuse a gender consciousness to our mission to attain economic freedom in our lifetime.

D. Contemporary Gender Discourse and Practice in the ANCYL

39. The adoption of quotas for gender representation was both a result of the struggle sustained by women within the movement as well as a reflection the fact that gender quotas have become the most popular strategy worldwide for increasing women's participation and equality in political and state structures. The presence of this constitutional clause has been covertly and overtly contested by men and to a lesser extent women within the organisation. Among the arguments against quotas posit that they are a source of displacement for men within our structures and that they undermine attempts to build a strong leadership based on capacity. In other words, women are being allotted seats not because of capacity and capability but based on their sex – something

²⁸ Dunkle, K, Jewkes, R Brown, H., Mdntyre, J., Gray, G, Harlow, S (2003) Gender-based Violence and HIV infection Among Pregnant Women in Soweto. Pretoria: Gender and Health Group, Medical Research Council.

²⁹ Bollen, S., Artz, L., Vetten, L, Louw, A. (1999), Violence Against Women in Metropolitan South Africa: A Study on Impact and Service Delivery. Monograph No 41, The Institute for Security Studies.

³⁰ Dunkle, K, Op.Cit.

³¹ Criminalising Injustice: Violence Against Women in South Africa, Shadow Report, March 2010, POWA.

³² Virginity testing is particularly problematic as it reinforces patriarchal stereotypes about women's behaviour and sexuality without applying the same standards to men.

which is argued to be in itself sexist. An argument that is common amongst female members is that quotas reduce women into “charity cases” and undermines women’s capacity to access leadership positions through their own efforts. Yet another criticism of quotas is that they stifle democracy and deny members the right to choose their leaders in that quotas pre-empt voter’s choices. A less popular objection is that such measures may work against women as they impose a glass ceiling in the form of a percentage to be occupied by women.

40. Except for the “glass ceiling” argument, most of these postulations are liberal in approach, expecting women, who have suffered decades of oppression and exclusion both in society and in political organisations, to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. Many of these also resonate with some of the liberal and racist arguments against affirmative action and the need to redress racial injustices in the workplace. Such postulations show complete oblivion to the structural barriers that prevent women from ascending political office in numbers.
41. We argue here that quotas are a necessary and yet insufficient measure to increase women’s representation and foster their participation in political structures such as the ANCYL. This is because under normal circumstances, women tend to be discriminated and rarely voted for. Organisations do not stand above society and the same prejudices and discrimination that prevails in society are also reflected in our own organisations. Instituting a quota for women also aids the active recruitment of women by political organisations in order to have sufficient candidates to fill the quota.
42. These are some of the results that quotas, introduced via political parties, have facilitated in Scandinavian countries, particularly Sweden, Denmark and Norway and many other parts of the world. These countries are well known for having a very high female representation in politics. An interesting observation is that quotas were not introduced as a consequence of a national legislative requirement or a constitutional clause requiring a high women representation. Rather, the entry and high presence of women in the state and other areas of life came as a direct result of internal party reforms introduced through the major political parties (social democratic and left parties)³³ and propelled by the groundswell of activism embarked upon by the women’s movement.
43. Amongst the first Scandinavian political parties to introduce quotas was the Norwegian Labour Party (1983) which decided that “at all elections and nominations both sexes must be represented by at least 40 per cent”. In 1988, the Danish Social Democratic Party stated, “each sex has the right to a representation of at least 40 per cent of the Social Democratic candidates for local and regional elections.” In 1994, the Swedish Social Democratic Party introduced the principle of “every second on the list a woman”. This means that if the first on the list of electoral candidates is a man, the next must be a woman, followed by a man, followed by a woman, or vice versa.³⁴ The Young Left of Sweden, which is a youth wing of the Swedish Left Party, the third largest party in Sweden, is currently debating the phasing out of quotas as a substantial number of its members feel that it has achieved sufficient results within the organisation.

³³ Rightwing parties rejected the idea of quotas on the basis that they are in contradiction with liberal values.

³⁴ Dahlerup, D, *Using Quotas to Increase Women’s Political Representation*, in Women in Parliament beyond Numbers, Stockholm: International Idea, 1998, p.4.

44. In all these cases there is a general agreement that quotas alone are not enough and that the success of such affirmative action measures largely depends on implementation. The introduction of quotas for women faced two main problems in Scandinavian countries. Firstly, it was sometimes difficult to find a sufficient number of women who were willing to stand for election. Second, conflict erupted if a party had to dismiss a male incumbent in order to include a woman.³⁵
45. The overall conclusion that can be drawn from these cases is that quotas are extremely useful in enforcing equal representation of women in structures they would not have otherwise been represented in. Even so, the quota alone does not do away with some of the structural barriers to women's active involvement in politics in a patriarchal society. "A quota system cannot remove the obstacles of combining job, family and political activity; a significant issue for women and a bigger problem for women than for men."³⁶ Yet this is one of the reasons why a quota is necessary – to challenge the male dominant values and culture within organisations as well as strengthen an organisation's capacity in challenging women's oppression.
46. Certainly, this is one of the biggest problems that the ANCYL currently faces with regards to quotas and getting the optimum levels of women in positions of leadership, recruiting a sizeable number of women as well as changing the culture and traditions of the organisation in a way that it truly becomes a home for young women. The introduction of quotas in 2004 has certainly produced good results. A picture of the ANCYL leadership across all levels of the organisation today looks fundamentally different to what it was ten years ago. A sizeable amount of female cadres have been developed by the organisation and this is something certainly worth applauding. However, to what extent has this changed the culture and tradition within the organisation? Put differently is the ANCYL today responsive and sensitive to some of the barriers that women face in political life?
47. A number of problems still persist in this regard. In the first instance, how many times do our meeting credentials account for the number of women present checked against the gender and affirmative action provision in the constitution? Have quotas made our structures more inclined to recruiting women? The following observations suffice.
48. The gender quota has not yet been internalised in the culture of the organisation and women's leadership is yet to be naturalised. The scenario wherein the election of women into leadership and the gender quota is considered only once the top officials have been elected is simply too common in our structures. Women's leadership is still an afterthought, an obligation to be fulfilled but only once the top positions have been settled and occupied by males. Further, women candidates often face the toughest scrutiny, expected to have twice the capacity possessed by men in order to qualify for election. It is often assumed that men have an innate capacity to lead. This expectation is also carried by fellow women in the organisation, something that shows that as much as we must deal with male prejudices against women within the organisation, women's internalised oppression should also be addressed.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid. p.5.

49. Women also tend to be judged unfairly according to how they lead their lives. The way, in which they use their sexuality, they dress and with whom they are associated intimately forms part of this patriarchal checklist barring women from being given electoral responsibility. This is but a reflection of the general way in which patriarchy seeks to control women's bodily autonomy and sexuality.
50. Although our national and to a lesser extent our provincial structures feature good female authorities in positions previously the preserve of men such as Secretary, lower structures have not made significant progress in this regard. More often than not, women are elected in deputy positions, and this reinforces the stereotype that a woman's place is on the side of the man, as his anchor and assistant.
51. Not to be doubted is the ANCYL's commitment to the struggle against patriarchy. Whether directly or indirectly, key campaigns of the ANCYL have had an impact in raising consciousness around patriarchy as a system and its impact on both young men and women. From congress to congress, the membership of the ANCYL has mandated the organisation to challenge patriarchy as a system through inter alia embarking on the campaigns against gender stereotyping in the media; a campaign for free sanitary towels for poor women; the increase in the age of children qualifying for the Child Support Grant (CSG) to 18 years; sexual harassment in the workplace and the healthy lifestyles campaign (one partner campaign);
52. Previous congresses have also mandated us to do the following: Conduct an annual audit of young women membership of the ANCYL; reward branches, regions and provinces that excel in terms of conducting gender campaigns and programmes; strengthen our fundraising strategy so as to make it gender responsive and friendly; capacitate our structures with gender officers/ focal persons to ensure the implementation of gender resolutions; embark on joint campaigns with the ANCWL – particularly on issues affecting young women such as forced marriages and rape; as well as undertaking cadre development that is gender sensitive; with a focus on both men and women in the organisation.
53. We have made tangible gains on some of these campaigns such as the campaign to increase the age for the Child Support Grant from as well as ensuring that access to free sanitary towels becomes a government program. We have also contributed the conscientisation of society around gender issues.
54. However, crucial questions should be posed. Are our structures actively campaigning on gender issues? Are our branches, regions and provinces sufficiently capacitated to coordinate gender campaigns? Is our cadre development approach sensitive and responsive to our commitments to gender equality? To what extent have we succeeded in building a gender conscious young male cadre? What forms of monitoring and evaluation should we put in place to ensure that congress resolution on gender do not evade our implementation radar as an organisation? How do we practically ensure that our mandates on gender issues are adequately resourced? What sorts of international partnerships can form in order to cultivate international learning on gender issues?

55. We also need to assess the extent to which organisational culture, norm and tradition been responsive to the needs of women as ordinary members and those in leadership. For instance, meeting times are often unsuitable for many young women who are also expected to perform their maternal duties such as looking after children and other domestic duties. Our gatherings and meetings are still insensitive to the need for the provision of childcare facilities in order to enable (mostly) women to participate fully in the organisation without hindrance from their “maternal” responsibilities. Another point to note is that there is still little consideration for women’s safety with meetings ending in late hours of the night, placing many at the hands of the unreliable public transport system and at vulnerability to sexual assault and rape. The 24th National Congress would have done a disservice if it does not pay delicate attention to these matters.

E. A Program to transform gender relations in our society

56. The realisation of gender equality depends as much on a strong locus of gender advocacy rooted in the women’s movement as it does on practical campaigns aimed at day to day organising around women’s practical gender needs. It also requires stem leadership from the ANC as the leader of the state and the leader of South African society. Thus marching towards the 100th anniversary of the ANC, the following are the key demands that our Congress should make with a view of radically transforming gender relations in our society.

Comprehensive Public Early Childhood Development

57. The ANCYL should pronounce itself on the need for a comprehensive public early childhood development system which caters for children from the age of three. Currently, only 13% of children in South Africa have access to early childhood development.³⁷ Access to early childhood is determined both by race and class location. Early childhood development is crucial for early preparation and subsequent success of learners. Due to lack of access to early childhood development centres, the burden of early education is borne by young mothers and women generally, most of whom are single parents and poor. As a result, young women’s insertion and presence in the labour market is interrupted and they are often deprived of the opportunity to earn an income or educate themselves. Furthermore, the only income that some of these caregivers acquire is the Child Support Grant (CSG) which is not enough in terms of addressing the needs of the child and the parent. It has also been proven that there is a correlation between absence of early childhood development and school failure, drop-out and high repetition rates. Extensive early childhood development can do wonders for easing the burden of childcare on young women.

Sharing the burdens of parenting

58. The ANCYL should also, subject to further research and case study interrogation, advocate for labour legislation that seeks to increase women’s participation in the labour market whilst also equally distributing childrearing responsibilities between men and women

³⁷ Vally, S, Citizenship and Children’s Education Rights in South Africa, <http://dbnweb2.ukzn.ac.za>

through for instance extending the provision for paternal leave accompanied by stringent enforcement mechanisms.

A Gendered Social Security System

59. There are no easy answers to easing the burden of parenting on women. The CSG as an intervention is primarily targeted at the child even though it is claimed by the primary care giver. Part of what the 24th National Congress' work should be to defend and reaffirm the existence of the CSG as an intervention of the democratic state. We should also do a thorough analysis of the other social grants such as the Foster Child Grant. Is it not time that we propose measures that target and compensate those who are primary care givers for children? Would this have to be means tested and would it not indirectly compensate women for the primary responsibility for childcare?

Decriminalisation of Sex Work

60. We must lead society in a campaign against the decriminalisation of sex work. Morally scolding sex work as an activity in an economy characterised by race, class and gender inequalities, unemployment and poverty is sheer hypocrisy. Decriminalisation means that all laws that criminalise sex work must be repealed. This should be accompanied by laws which target the purchasers of sexual services as well as a state driven and funded programme aimed at enhancing exit strategies for those involved in the sex trade as sellers of sexual services. This can include specific benefits for women wishing to leave the trade, specialist drug and alcohol counselling services, accommodation etc. The positive outcomes of this approach would include the elimination of the social exclusion of sex workers, removing the double standards that characterise how the law targets sex workers and not the patrons/client as well as that the health, safety and conditions of work for sex workers would greatly improve.

Enhancing Reproductive Choice and Reproductive Health for Young Women

61. A campaign aimed at enhancing the reproductive choices of young women must also be undertaken. This can include advocacy for the strengthening early sex education in schools; affordable and accessible gynaecological services for all women; free access to quality and medically safe means of contraception and the defence of the right to legal and medically safe termination of pregnancy. If successful, the first two will delay parenthood amongst youth.

62. The advancement and defence of these rights is imperative given some of the rightwing and religious/cultural attacks on them as well as the startling reality that many young girls are subjected to backdoor and unsafe abortion services even though the right to terminate pregnancy was won as early as 1996. This sad reality is largely fostered by the hostile reception in the doorsteps of public health facilities.

63. Part of our campaign to improve women's reproductive rights must also include advocacy for mandatory vaccination for adolescents (boys and girls) in order to prevent cancer;

more investment of public resources into medical equipment geared towards cancer treatment; more investment on making gynaecological services available to poor women.

64. This must also be linked to our demand for a comprehensive universal health care system - through the National Health Insurance - as indeed history proves that only countries that have a comprehensive universal national health system stand a better chance to provide adequate services for reproductive choice than those that outsource this to the market.

Improved Access to Sanitary Towels

65. In the same vein, we must also campaign not only to ensure that the ANC government lives up to the commitment to make sanitary towels freely available to indigent women through our municipalities. The free availability of sanitary towels to poor girls and women will have a direct impact on the lives of young women. We are all too aware that some studies have begun drawing a correlation between the lack/poor access to sanitary towels and the engagement of young girls into sexually exploitative relationships/transactional sex; for low performance of girl-children at schools due to continuous absenteeism and lack of concentration. Some genital infections are contracted through the use of rags and newspapers as substitutes to the ever so expensive sanitary towels.
66. We must also continue to advocate for better resourced schools as many young girls attending schools with poor ablution systems, pit latrines and lack of sanitary towels disposal bins are placed at a serious discomfort every time they have their monthly periods. This campaign has to be multifaceted – highlighting the educational and health benefits of making sanitary towels freely available to all women.
67. We should also campaign to ensure that sanitary towels qualify as zero rate goods, meaning that they must be struck off the 14% Value Added Tax (VAT) list. This has been a key demand of gender activists in many African countries including Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. In the latter country, a campaign waged by activist groups resulted in the Minister of Finance striking sanitary towels off the 16% VAT list.

Sexual Violence, Rape and HIV/AIDS

68. The ANCYL must heighten the campaign against sexual violence and rape. This campaign must also highlight the plight of lesbian women, in particular those who are black and poor and who find themselves at the receiving end of patriarchal notions about women's sexuality. This may include calling for:
- The transformation of the judiciary and a call for speedy prosecution in rape cases;
 - Better support structures and legal assistance to victims during the process of complaint, medical examination, police interrogation and court proceedings;
 - We must encourage the state through the Ministry of Women, Children and People with Disabilities and the National Gender Machinery to publicly condemn

violence against homosexual people and raise awareness around issues affecting them, especially during the 16 Days of Activism campaign.

- We should also popularise and campaign for greater access to the HIV preventative post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) treatment for victims of rape and sexual violence.
- The ANCYL should support the campaign for the introduction of a Hate Crimes Bill so that violence against lesbians, gays, transgendered and bisexual (LGTB) people can be prosecuted as hate crimes as it is targeted at a set of people based on their sexual orientation.
- Campaign for better street lighting and escort services provided by police; more police emergency telephones and the public provision of shelters for abused women and their children.

A Decisive and Gender Conscious Leadership

69. A critical question that we need to ask ourselves is whether is it not time that the ANC as the leader of South African society actively campaigns against practices such polygamy, forced marriages and virginity testing? The critical task towards the centenary of the ANC is to assert this leadership role whilst also reinvigorating the mass character of the organisation which was built and nurtured through leading the people even at difficult times and under difficult circumstances. Frelimo, the national liberation movement of Mozambique along with the Mozambican Women's Organisation (OMM) in the immediate period after independence led campaigns for the banning of polygamy, forced marriages, lobola and many other practices considered to be perpetuating patriarchy. For this, a strong organisation that won the loyalties of the majority of the population as well as an exemplary and decisive leadership that was opposed to patriarchy along with all other forms of oppression was necessary. In doing this, the leadership of the national liberation movement in Mozambique faced fierce opposition but the resolve of the organisation earned it the status of being a driver of change and progress, especially in the terrain of women's rights. A gender conscious leadership is an absolute must have if we are to defeat patriarchy. We should also be steadfast in cultivating an understanding that culture is not static but changes and adapts to social and economic factors. We must strengthen our One Partner Campaign as part of fighting HIV/AIDS.

Fighting Gender Stereotyping in the Media

70. Consistent with our previous resolutions, the 24th National Congress should also assess the extent to which we have been able to lead a thoroughly conceptualised campaign, using all relevant tools such as the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, against gender stereotyping in the media. In more ways than one, the media often propagates gender stereotypes through newspaper reporting, television programmes and advertising. Stories about sexual violence in newspapers are often insensitive and look at these incidents in an isolated fashion. Television programmes and adverts often accentuate women's objectification and emphasise patriarchal gender roles for both men and women. The overriding narrative is that domestic labour is women's labour and that men are exude aggressive behaviour, high levels of machismo as well as serve as providers. The reality of single parenthood, child-headed households etc is seldom depicted.

Neoliberalism is at odds with the quest for Gender Equality

71. Attacks on the neoliberal development trajectory must be intensified by amongst others advocating for greater and direct state involvement in the provision of basic goods and services such as water, electricity, housing, and infrastructure. This is because as we have indicated above, black working class women have been the major casualties of the current neoliberal approach to development. Consistent with a neoliberal discourse that seeks to individualise social problems and reduce the role of the state in crucial aspects of social life, the number of social workers produced by our institutions of higher learning has significantly decreased. This has affected the state's ability to address problems such as forced marriages and the protection of girl children. We should support the Department of Social Development in its endeavours to train social workers through bursaries and scholarships, call for the reopening of closed Social Work departments in many institutions of higher learning as well as encourage young people to consider social work as a career of choice.

The National Gender Machinery

72. Our Congress also needs to ask difficult and somewhat uncomfortable questions about the state of institutions aimed at advancing gender equality in our country. Such questions include: What substantive contribution has the Commission on Gender Equality as a Chapter Nine Institution made in the struggle for gender equality? How can the National Gender Machinery be improved and what is the role of young women in this? Upon hindsight and based on historical evidence, was it a wise decision to club the Ministry of Women along with other groups such as children and people with disabilities whose vulnerability is fundamentally different to women's systematic oppression under patriarchy. Does this fusion not reinforce the patriarchal expectations that the task of looking after children and people with disabilities should fall solely on the shoulders of women? How effective is the women's movement in South Africa? Has the Progressive Women's Movement (which is led by our own ANCWL) made the strides that we expected it to? Have we been able to foster a vibrant women's movement on the African continent?

F. Transforming the ANCYL into a Home for Young Gender Activists

73. The ANCYL is the leading youth political organisation in the country and continues to provide leadership to the youth of South Africa in a variety of ways. It is important that attention be dedicated to improving the organisation's posturing on gender issues. This can include the following:
74. We can institute woman to woman self defence training programme which will be designed to develop psychological and physical defence skills for young women. This strategy is pursued by a number of organisations, including the Young Left of Sweden. The advantages of this are that young women are provided with the opportunity to enhance their physical capacities, increase assertiveness and confidence, decrease their

vulnerability, extend their freedom of mobility as well as promote their independence. In the Nordic countries, many organisations that undertake this type of activity also focus on the structural and cultural foundations of sexualised violence. Through what is called the feminist self defence, different organisations train their members in self defence whilst also training instructors to facilitate such a programme. These kinds of programmes also place us on a better platform from which to recruit more women into the ANCYL.

75. Organisational culture must also change in a manner that is sensitive to young women and the burdens they face as a result of patriarchy. However, making the league a home for women by accommodating women through being sensitive to patriarchal gender roles which may include changing meeting times also carries the danger that these roles may become accepted as natural women's work. Another pitfall of this is that making provisions for women to perform these patriarchal roles and the need for the league to be accommodative towards these responsibilities can lead to a situation where the election of women into roles of political responsibility is seen as burdensome and hindrance to organisational progress. This is why despite our commitments to make the ANCYL a home for women, we must always keep in mind that we have a bigger struggle to wage and that the society that we are struggling for is one in which patriarchy; racial oppression and class exploitation are done away with.
76. There is also a need to strengthen the Young Women's Assemblies and make them locus for gender activism. The idea of institutionalised separate spaces for women within political parties is not a new one. For years political organisations and the women's movement have been debating this issue. Research shows that separate spaces such as the Young Women's Assemblies are important for attracting women activists and women members, encouraging women to stand for elections, mentoring, training programmes and confidence building for women as well as providing a locus from which political parties' positions on women's issues can be strengthened.³⁸ These spaces are important in overcoming the divide that currently exists between descriptive (quantity) and substantive (qualitative) representation.
77. This separate space is also crucial for women to formulate their own ideas as women and as a constituency that is affected by patriarchy. This approach is also favoured to nurture young female authorities within political parties. Successful implementation of this has led in some instances to an increased pool of female authorities, women who are well trained in advancing gender policy leadership as well as a more responsive internal party attitude to matters affecting women in gendered ways. Organisations that have adopted the approach also tend to adopt more gender sensitive campaigns that capture the imaginations of even those women that fall outside their membership ambit.³⁹
78. The Young Women's Assemblies must have the following amongst its tasks: to provide a forum for young women to share experiences and act as a support base for women in the ANCYL; to provide training space for young women in areas such as leadership, confidence and assertiveness, public speaking and debates, gender issues; to focus on issues facing

³⁸ For an in depth discussion on this see – Cutin, J, *Women, Political Leadership and Substantive Representation – the Case of New Zealand*, *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol, 3, No.61, 2008, pp. 490-504.

³⁹ See also I. Norderval, 'Party and legislative participation among Scandinavian women' in Sylvia Bashevkin (ed.), *Women and Politics in Western Europe* Frank Cass, 1985.

young women - to lobby for these issues to be on the agenda of ANCYL and the ANCWL and to encourage and build gender consciousness and commitment to women's emancipation amongst young women and men in the ANCYL. This is not an assertion that women are "charity cases" incapable of leading but rather an admission that a patriarchal society trains and prepares men for positions of leadership be it in the family, religious institutions, schools etc. As such dedicated efforts must be invested in cultivating female authorities through internal training and capacity building.

79. The assemblies should also provide the locus for the initiation of gender campaigns and ensure that these are taken by the ANCYL, the ANC and the ANCWL. The aim must also be to change the manner in which young women experience the broader women's movement, in particular the ANCWL and the Progressive Women's Movement. This is an experience of discrimination on the basis of age and an inclination for the mobilisation of women under the cloak of motherhood. The organisation must adopt stringent monitoring measures to ensure that young women who are members of the ANCYL and above the age of eighteen join and fully participate in the political life of the ANCWL ensuring that it also addresses the needs of young women in the movement and in society broadly.
80. Certainly, those in favour of gender mainstreaming as a strategy many argue that women's assemblies will ghettoise women's issues, resulting in these issues not finding expression in broader organisational policy perspectives. However, to get the optimum results from gender mainstreaming, a locus of activism which can craft and shape policy positions affecting women is necessary. Gender mainstreaming on its own will deny us the opportunity to discuss issues that are central to women's subordination. This can strip the quest for gender equality off its political edge, the result of which is a highly technocratic and depoliticised process or what can be called Gender Disaggregation. Thus from this perspective, the idea of separate spaces for women within the organisation through the women's assemblies must be seen as a starting point to address substantive policy issues on matters affecting women. The binary between separate spaces and gender mainstreaming is therefore a false one. The two should be considered part of the same continuum.

G. Conclusion

81. The measures proposed herein do not and will not fundamentally alter the nature of women's oppression under patriarchy. They do however offer creative ways in which the ANCYL can position itself in the struggle against women's oppression by introducing internal mechanisms aimed at making the organisation a home for young women. A sustained assault on patriarchy requires a strong and united women's movement and a leading role for women in the struggle for their own liberation. Campaigns calling for an increased state intervention in the economy are crucial for it is on the backs of interventionist states that many women's rights were won. In addition to educating society about women's oppression, we must continue to wage attacks on the neoliberal development trajectory as this has been a great setback in terms of the realisation gender equality.