



*"Rebuilding a united and radical  
ANC Youth League for the advancement  
of economic freedom in our lifetime."*

# **ANC Youth League 25<sup>th</sup> National Congress**

**GALLAGHER ESTATE**

**24 - 28 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**ORGANISATIONAL BUILDING**

# THE NATURE, CHARACTER AND ROLE OF THE ANCYL

*Debating the ideological, political and organisational positioning of the ANC Youth League*

## A DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

### A PRELUDE

1. It is common cause that the ANCYL was established in 1944 and that since then it has played an instrumental role in radicalizing the ANC and turning it into a revolutionary organization. For successive generations, leaders and members of the ANCYL have distinguished their contribution in shaping not only the ANC but have been a critical player in South African, Continental and world politics in line with the demands of each given period in history.
2. Fast forwarding to 2013, the NEC of the ANCYL was disbanded and a transitional National Task Team was constituted to rebuild the ANCYL. Thus, this document serves as '**a base document**' that initiates a discussion around the question of how appropriately, and with limited experience, should the NTT and all members rebuild the ANCYL.
3. As we proceed towards the 25<sup>th</sup> national Congress a series of discussion documents will be produced to attend to a variety of things as it traditionally happens in the organization. This discussion document is meant to trigger a conversation around strategic political questions that must preoccupy the 25<sup>th</sup> national Congress so that it can do justice to the historical moment in which we find ourselves as the ANCYL.
4. Before delving into the core thesis of this discussion document, and If the rebuilding of the ANCYL that is to be successful, it is necessary to outline the painful yet necessary narrative that (although not conclusive) contributed to the dissolution of the ANCYL NEC; triggering the very notion of rebuilding.
5. At the ANC 2012 conference, the state of the ANCYL was articulated by the ANC 53<sup>rd</sup> as that of "*an antagonistic relationship with the mother-body (ANC), seemingly defining itself outside of the political framework of the ANC...and the emerging tendency in the ANCYL at different levels to recall and suspend members without due process*". This characterization was equally observed when the NTT went to structures.

6. An alien culture had engulfed the organization; with rampant gate keeping, membership manipulation and institutionalized factionalism that had deeply entrenched itself. Over time, it became a norm than an exception to circumvent and undermine organizational procedures and constitutional injunctions with impunity in a bid to muzzle perceived opponents.
7. In the process of organisational rebuilding, it would thus be deceitful to hide our heads in the sand and behave as though nothing had wrong in order to evade the possibility of being given this or the other label.
8. It is evident and indisputable that the period pre and post Mangaung was characterized by a YL that constituted itself as independent opposition from within the ANC. Anarchy, factionalism, circumventing of organizational processes was an order of the day as long as they were in line with Mangaung electoral objectives. Any dissenting voice was viciously dealt with, structures dissolved or membership of comrades denied if not suspended. The outcome of organizational processes was determined as to whether one supports the dominant factional line of march or not.

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. For a great period to come the political programme of the ANC Youth League will be drawn from the broad perspectives mapped out by the 24<sup>th</sup> National Congress as a strategy of achieving our generational mission, Economic Freedom in our Lifetime. It is necessary to commence all our political reflections with this statement in light of the confusion that may have emerged following the dissolution of the then NEC of the ANC YL by the ANC.
2. Of all the legitimacy questions confronting us as the ANC Youth League currently none of them call into question the strategic programme of Economic Freedom in Our Lifetime. This asserts the 24<sup>th</sup> National Congress as our strategic point of reference in our political activities.
3. Quite naturally, we will continually engage our core discussion paper on Economic Freedom in Our Lifetime as adopted by this congress like we do all others. We will reintroduce it and update necessary elements in it as deemed necessary by specific developments globally, domestically and within the policy and ideological discourse in the Congress Movement broadly.
4. Our present challenges simply question whether or not we have, in the here and now, the best organisational machinery necessary to pursue and achieve the objectives of the radical

programme we have set ourselves as a generational mission. Quite importantly, these challenges provide an opportunity for us to reflect on the very subjective weaknesses that pose a threat on our ability to realize our generational mission and the broad objectives of the national democratic revolution.

5. In other words, the core questions in the rebuilding of the ANC Youth League are partly related to the need to improve our organisational machinery in order to achieve a democratic environment with efficient bureaucratic systems that are relatively insulated from manipulation. This is with regards the problematic culture of abusing organisational processes for purposes of gate-keeping and renting membership for internal electoral ends.
6. Furthermore and quite urgently, we have to attend to the question of our institutionalized strategic political reasoning. This is merited by the fact that institutional coherence around strategic political matters is the best platform around which we can anchor united political action and maximize organisational unity.
7. It is for this reason that we need to recall that at the centre of the dissolution of the then ANCYL NEC, other than our structures and finances being in shambles, was really the tension-in-reasoning between the ANC and the ANC Youth League regarding the strategic organisational and practical linkages between the ANC and its Leagues in the course of struggle. The resultant jostling between the ANC and the ANC Youth League over this strategic political question was a tension-ridden working and political relationship, including degenerate public exchanges.
8. In view of the foregoing, it is important that we locate this tension-in-reasoning within a theory of history that accounts for the nature of intergenerational relations generally, and specifically to our movement, and their attendant tensions. In this context, the strategic question arising is whether or not there are natural tensions that exist between different generations acting within one political space, let alone within one political organisation. This question extends to the point that, if these tensions exist, can they be negotiated away, or can they be managed into a lull or that they can never be contained.
9. Reflections of this nature would hopefully place us on a progressive pedestal upon which we can understand the nature of our political situation as the ANC Youth League in this juncture and to equally pursue a productive political conversation about the best strategic and tactical choices we should take in consolidating a politically and organisationally capable ANC Youth League.

## CHAPTER 1: THE CONCEPT OF THE ANC YOUTH LEAGUE REVISITED

### *Debating historical and philosophical trends at play*

10. In light of our present challenges and the need to emerge out of this situation with a coherent understanding of our existence as the ANC Youth League, it is of strategic necessity that we reflect on the historical dynamics from which the ANC Youth League came into existence. We must conduct these reflections from the stand point of both the unique circumstances within the ANC that led to these developments and also the general historical if not philosophical justifications for the existence of organised youth formations.
11. In the context of this exercise the key question that emerges is whether or not there are natural tensions that exist between different generations acting within one political space, let alone within one political organisation. This question extends to the point that, if these tensions exist, can they be negotiated away, or can they be managed into a lull or that they can never be contained.
12. Firstly, our rich tapestry of revolutionary theory has taught us in the ANC that our consciousness as political and social beings is developed by the objective conditions to which we were born and socialised. It is the sharpest contradictions of that epoch that mark out the most decisive impact on each generation's social and political socialisation. This necessarily suggests that since people of different generations are much likely to be born into epochs defined by varying political and social contradictions, their respective consciousness dynamics will reflect differentiated patterns.
13. In material terms the likelihood is that the younger generations reflect a leaping continuation in the consciousness of the old, without the older generations necessarily acknowledging this dynamic.
14. Regarding the dynamics within the ANC, history holds that the movement within the period 1912 to 1944 embodied an almost monotonous mannerism. It was an organisation of educated 'gentlemen', steeped in the then middle class culture of gentle engagements and reasoning. This was evidenced more so by the nature of the protest campaigns they led; articulated through petitions, deputations and letters appealing to the moral virtues of the powers of the day, in South Africa and Britain respectively.

15. For the older generation, the very idea of the ANC's existence was a radical break from the past of tribally fragmented African people. They had conceived a historic platform of consolidating a common African identity that was transcendent of tribal consciousness and a modern organisational instrument for articulating political grievances.
16. This mannerism referred to earlier counterpoised against an unrelenting arrogance and commitment to advancing oppression on the part of the powers of that day, all of this naturally led to the growth of a militant subculture of African Nationalism within the ANC. This militant subculture was embodied by the younger members of the ANC who in majority also had academic qualifications from Universities the world over, just like the senior leadership of the ANC.
17. Quite naturally, the first expression of this militant subculture was constant criticism of the ANC's strategy by the young members. Likewise, the retort by the older generation was a lament about adventurism and reckless if not populist ideas on the part of the youth. The result of this was a systematic marginalisation of this youth from mainstream ANC discourse as a direct attack on this rising militant criticism.
18. The determination to entrench this culture of militancy within the ANC, elevating it from a marginal subculture into mainstream discourse, led this youthful membership of the ANC to conceive the idea of forming a youth platform within the ANC, particularly in view of their marginalisation by the old guard. It's within this context that the idea of the ANC Youth League gained traction rapidly in the late 1930s up till its final adoption as ANC policy in the 1942 ANC conference. Of course it is only in 1944 that the resolution came to life with the Youth League being finally established.
19. Our forbearers, the 1944 generation, determined and driven by a vision of a transformed South African society in which all youth could pursue the fulfilments of life without much want or fear, acted out their determination by forming our organisation, the ANC Youth League.
20. The ANC Youth League was conceived, and indeed emerged, as an organised political podium upon which the youth of our country, united by the determination to change the situation of their country for the better, can crystallise their ideas into a coherent and practical program to bring about fundamental social change.
21. Given the accident of history that they were young and therefore not as much experienced about the workings of the world, these young people created of the ANC Youth League an

organisational tool through which all of us can act out our political ideals and gather experience about some strategic questions in history.

22. Convinced of the appropriateness of their vision, the generation of 1944 forcefully engendered into the ANC a militant culture of impatience with oppressive conditions and complacency about dealing with them.
23. Representative of the old cliché in revolutionary literature about the *old refusing to give way to the young and the young being impatient with the old*, it was as early as 1949 that contradictions on strategic reasoning between the ANC Youth League and the ANC emerged. This fallout was around matters of political strategy, with the Youth League forcefully advocating the adoption of more militant means of engaging the Apartheid regime and with the seating leadership of the ANC impatiently dismissing them as disrespectful, adventurist and irresponsible children.
24. In this instance, the ANC Youth League emerged victorious with the ANC adopting its militant political strategy of mass campaigns involving defiance, mass protests, boycotts, stay aways etc.
25. In similar vein, the same contradictions over strategy emerged between the older generation and the youth of the ANC over strategy. This was exemplified by the 1968 Hani Memorandum criticising the leadership of the ANC for being complacent if not totally selling out in exile. The youth of the ANC and MK was convinced of the need for more militant ways of engaging in military offensives against the Apartheid regime. Interestingly, key figures of this old guard being criticised were prominent agitators of the 1949 ANCYL Program of Action!
26. The reaction of the ANC and MK leadership was similar to that of the ANC in the 1940s, firstly treating this energetic criticism with contempt. Of course the resultant effect of all this was the convening of the historic 1969 Morogoro conference, adopting a Strategy and Tactics that drew greatly from the sentiments of the Hani Memorandum. This period had its own casualties like the expelled group of 8.
27. Of necessity thus is the need to understand our present challenges as reflective of contradictions that are inherent in intergenerational relations in the development of society and more so in internal discourse between generations in an organised institutional relationship as that of the ANC and the ANC Youth League. Inherent as they are, these objective contradictions may explode and tear our movement up depending on the subjective enterprise exercised by the leadership collectives acting within the movement at different historical epochs.

28. Thus within the context of our earlier posed question about whether or not there exist natural tensions in intergenerational engagements within our movement, we can draw the reflection that these contradictions exist over matters of strategy and the urgency of certain tactical choices in the course of struggle. Whereas the older generations are more inclined towards conservative means, the youth is naturally charged with the adventurous energy of seeking immediate and radical change of things.
29. The possibility of intergenerational ruptures in strategic thinking is both inherent and necessary in the course of a drawn out struggle for social change. It provides an opportunity for new ideas to be asserted and decisive leaps forward to be taken. In organisational terms, the onus is with all of us in the ANC Youth League and the ANC to create a systematic method of engaging in these rapturous intergenerational exchanges in a manner that inflicts the lowest possible damage on our structures and our collective public standing.
30. All of this should be done with the full knowledge that the future belongs to the youth of today and that it rests with this youth too to act with conviction and shape, in the womb of the present, the future they want to inherit. Thus the old must nurture this energy and not sneer upon it; they must cultivate in the consciousness of this youth the core and strategic values that must guide this energy without stifling it.
31. Indeed many generations of this ANC Youth League have successfully held up and followed the injunction so well coined by Frantz Fanon that, ***“Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, identify its mission; to either betray it or fulfil it.”***
32. It is a fact of history that each generation of the ANC Youth League was confronted with peculiar challenges, both organisational and political, that are quite different from a previous generation and a generation coming after them.
33. The decisive feature of history that has sustained the ANC Youth League as an organisation and legitimate voice of young people, and indeed all sections of the underdeveloped, is the determination to rise above these challenges and act in a manner that is consistent with an identified generational mission, and not to betray but to rather fulfil it.
34. Ever burdened by the truthfulness and historical validity of the injunction cited above, the ANC Youth League has always engaged itself in the study of the developments of history in the struggle for the realisation of the vision of our movement; the creation of a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa.



35. Having performed the task of studying the historical discourse of South Africa's development; we as a generation have correctly arrived at the conclusion that the biggest threat to the sustainability of our democracy and indeed our hard won freedom is the weight of social inequalities and underdevelopment that rest so heavily on the shoulders of present day South Africa.
36. In this regard, we have summed up the mission of this generation as the pursuit of Economic Freedom In Our Lifetime, determined to advance the cause for fundamental social change towards the creation of a society in which the resources and wealth of this country, as even dictated by the Freedom Charter, are equitably shared amongst the citizens of South Africa.
37. We are conscious of the fact that to achieve this equitable society, we need amongst other things the creation of a stable and effective education system, an evenly resourced health care system, the transformation of the ownership and structure of our economy to overcome the trappings of spatial and racial inequalities.
38. Thus we have committed ourselves as the ANC Youth League to constantly pursue such critical questions as related to these challenges confronting our country, and to seek out systematic interventions that will resolve all of these problems towards the realisation of the vision of the ANC; that of the fundamental transformation of South Africa and the creation of a National Democratic Society.
39. All of these challenges confronting our country can best be attended to by a collective drive of all South Africans, particularly the organised progressive social forces as led by the ANC, with us as the youth of the movement energetically taking the front line as the cutting edge of the national democratic revolution.
40. We are committed to occupying the front line of South Africa's social transformation and to ceaselessly entrench a culture of conceiving radical solutions and propagate them with an engaged militancy. The decisive feature of an *'engaged militancy'* is the preoccupation with consolidating sufficient intellectual and organisational capital capable of defending our progressive programme of Economic Freedom In our lifetime against the neo-liberal and conservative social forces that are determined to discredit the ANC Youth League's historic intervention on our country's socio-economic transformation discourse as well as to weaken the ANC's public standing as a capable force of revolutionary social change.

41. It is in this same spirit that we, as the ANC Youth League, are charged with an obligation not to view our ongoing process of organisational rebuilding with gloom and despondency but rather as an opportunity to take stock of the milestones achieved by this organisation against resilient obstacles and the struggle heritage accumulated throughout these years.
42. As we pursue Economic Freedom In Our Lifetime, we are charged with the responsibility to ask ourselves the question of what are the values and lessons from the past 70 years of existence and the 20 years of democracy, constituting the heritage of our movement, that we should recall as a guide to help us understand the best way to achieve whatever objectives we set ourselves, in this instance being Economic Freedom in our lifetime.
43. Amongst the core values that constitute our heritage, and through which we can best achieve our objectives, is the mobilisation of the broadest sections of South African society behind our ideals and program of Economic Freedom.
44. We should entrench it amongst ourselves that as a leading example of history that must guide us is the ever challenging need to pursue our vision with the broadest possible buy-in of South African society at large, both black and white, young and old; without entrenching any sense of alienation.
45. We must commit ourselves to the effort of entrenching a sense and spirit of unity amongst South Africans in the struggle for Economic Freedom, warding-off whatever insecurities this clarion call may provoke in some sections of our society, and to convince all South Africans that it is in the best interest of all of us to collectively strive for the achievement of the core objectives of this vision.

## **CHAPTER 2: BALANCING THE TWIN TASKS OF THE ANC YOUTH LEAGUE**

46. Over the last few years we have experienced a tumultuous situation of varying and polemical understandings within our movement about the nature of the strategic political relationship between the ANC and its Leagues. The eventuality of these differences was a collision between these strands, expressed organizationally through political fallout between the leadership of the ANC Youth League and the ANC.
47. Amongst these is the theoretical strand advancing the view point that; since the ANC Youth League is a youth wing of the ANC, logically it should follow that it takes the political line of march from the ANC. In the context of this logic, the ANC Youth League has got to fixate its

political and organizational capital within the bounds of popularizing ANC adopted policy positions, including tactical policy retreats that may be taken at different moments in the course of the national democratic revolution.

48. In its strict form, this strand holds firmly that the ANC Youth League must accept policy directives from the ANC, avoiding fully any public demonstration of reasoning differently, lest this plays into the hands of the broad onslaught by various forces seeking to weaken the public standing of the ANC.
49. All of this rests on the understanding that the ANC is navigating an increasingly hostile environment of public discourse with the related sensitive electoral platform from which legitimacy of governing is derived. Thus, any difference of opinion that plays itself out in the public domain may present the ANC Youth League or personalities within the League as a political and ideological alternative to the ANC and thus contribute to its public standing being weakened.
50. In this regard, the ANC Youth League must understand its role as that of mobilizing young people behind the ANC's broad vision of social transformation as representative of the tasks of the national democratic revolution; popularize ANC policies at all times and act as a militant line of defense of the ANC against criticism leveled against it by organized forces of opposition and similar intellectual forces opposed to the national democratic revolution.
51. The foregoing constitutes the core theoretical and political muscle driving what we can understand as the first tendency making a case about what should be the role of the ANC Youth League both within the ANC and society at large. At most, this strand is located more within the ANC than in the ANC Youth League.
52. Standing in contention to the strand referred to above is the theoretical strand whose political and theoretical muscle banks largely on the notion of the 'autonomy' of the ANC Youth League referred to in the constitutions of both the ANC and the Youth League. This is related to the matter of the ANC Youth League existing with the organizational independence to elect its own leaders, set up its structures, and outline its own political program and to organize its activities.
53. From the vantage point of this strand, the ANC Youth League needs this autonomy as a strategic platform from which young people can be organized behind the political objectives of the ANC and as an organizational platform from which the Youth League can continually pursue youth interests within the ANC; infuse a militant, radical and energetic culture into the ANC.

54. It proceeds to make the argument that the ANC Youth League has an existential duty to sustain radical ideological notions on matters of political and economic discourse within the ANC and to sustain militant political activism in general.
55. In the context of this reasoning, notwithstanding the accepted fact of the ANC being the leading political force of the national democratic revolution, the ANC Youth League is understood to have a historically abiding duty to constantly whip the ANC into a militant path in the course of pursuing the objectives of the NDR.
56. This necessarily includes popular agitation within and outside the ANC for the acceptance of policy positions of a relative radical mould at all times, as a commitment to a militant effort at achieving the objectives of the NDR. The ANC Youth League, and resting on its youthfulness, thus becomes an institutional platform within which these radical ideological notions can best be conceived.
57. Likewise, the ANC Youth League thus becomes an organizational driving force for the adoption of these radical policy positions by the ANC as well as to propagate these positions in society broadly.
58. Added to this is the organizational question of the ANC Youth League being an integral part of the ANC and thus owning the political right to engage in organizational dynamics of the ANC. This is with regards the fact of the ANC Youth League having status in decision making platforms of the ANC, including such matters as leadership elections.
59. The related tendency in this regard is to use these policy positions as the basis of engaging even in leadership contests in the ANC. This derives from the reasoning that there is a direct relationship between political objectives being pursued at a given point in history and the subjective capacities of leaders holding the responsibility to lead the effort of achieving those objectives.
60. Thus the thrust of this reasoning holds that the ANC Youth League should, unflinchingly, engage in militant discourse that is designed to shake the foundations of conservative thinking both in the ANC and society. It confesses the knowledge that this will naturally make both the ANC and society uncomfortable.

## COMPETING STRANDS: IS THERE A BALANCE?

61. It is not difficult to notice that both strands outlined above propagate valid arguments about the ANC Youth League. What is also true is that they each pursue these arguments in a one-dimensional, if not puritanical, manner. This latter fact thus makes each one of them politically problematic when taken alone.
62. The polemical summary of the tension between these two strands when taken separately of each other has held that the one strand wants to turn the ANC Youth League into a desk whilst the charge levelled against the other strand is that it wants to turn the ANC Youth League into a rogue oppositionist formation against the ANC. Indeed both of these strands are pursued as mutually exclusive of each other.
63. In elucidating this point it is important to recall that the ANC Youth League is charged with the mobilisation of youth behind the vision of the ANC, embracing (albeit critically) the strategy and tactics of the ANC; and to champion youth interests in the ANC and society in general.
64. What is constantly placed before the ANC Youth League is the need to locate these two tasks in practice within the permits and limits of a given epoch in history. This is because each epoch in history has a unique objective balance of competing social forces that requires specific political and organizational choices that recognize the nature of the political environment and the forces at play.
65. In the context of the current epoch, it is undeniable that the movement is navigating an increasingly hostile environment of public discourse with the related sensitive electoral platform from which legitimacy of governing is derived. This suggests that the national democratic revolution and its attendant tasks of radical social change are pursued within the context of a demanding political environment in which legitimacy to occupy levers of power is derived from competitive elections.
66. For instance in the context the ANC having been at the helm of government for the past 20 years, the ANC Youth League is charged with the responsibility to defend the gains scored in government and to popularize ANC policies at all times and act as a militant line of defense of the ANC against criticism leveled against it by organized forces of opposition and similar intellectual forces opposed to the national democratic revolution. It is necessary to act in this manner as a crucial means of keeping the youth of South Africa mobilized behind the vision of the ANC and to recognize the strides already made.

67. It is not within reasonable militancy or any stretch of radicalism to suggest that the ANC Youth League should not discharge the task referred to above and to suggest anything else would be to quite starkly advocate the opening up of the ANC to attack from all elements of society opposed to our national democratic revolution.
68. It is however true that combined with the need to defend the ANC from attacks and to continue mobilizing the youth behind the ANC, the ANC Youth League has an existential duty to sustain radical ideological notions on matters of political and economic discourse within the ANC and to sustain militant political activism in general. This is because older generations, as the sharp contradictions that developed their consciousness in their youthful days tend to pass; these older generations become more susceptible to conservative views and thus become complacent.
69. Thus, indeed the ANC Youth League has an abiding responsibility to rid the ANC of complacent trends and to ward off conservative tendencies that may grip the movement. It has a duty to understand the nature of the present political epoch and proceed to place the ANC in a radical discourse that will best enable it to respond to the challenges of our people.
70. It is necessary to point out that South Africa's public discourse is dominated by conservative ideas and thus the ANC is pursuing the transformation agenda within that environment. It is because of this fact that the ANC Youth League cannot only agitate its radical programme for Economic Freedom within ANC structures only. Rather, it has a duty to agitate these notions in society broadly given the fact that there are other social forces that must be contested in public discourse in order for us to cultivate a broad buy-in onto our perspectives by the public.
71. This doesn't discount, but is rather anchored, on mass campaigns against institutions that embody systemic power that holds back transformation and social justice. These institutions vary between public institutions of governance, education, judiciary, security and private institutions like the JSE, mining establishments, finance capital, media houses etc.
72. At times, the ANC may not share the same attitude towards things as the ANC Youth League. The major challenge for us as the ANC Youth League is to master the art of balancing our public agitation of these perspectives, even if the ANC has not bought into them, in a manner that doesn't weaken the ANC. The manner in which this can be expressed in practice at different moments is dependent largely on the political maturity of the leading sections of the ANC Youth

League and on the nature of the questions that the movement is dealing with at a given point in history.

73. What is certainly not debatable, and this holds true for ANC Youth League internal discourse even, is the question of comrades exchanging insults either in meetings or publicly with ANC leadership all in the name of militancy and radicalism. That situation is in direct contrast with the value system of comradely exchanges and mutual respect that has sustained positive discourse within the movement over the last century.
74. As earlier advanced, the two competing strands are self-limiting when pursued in a puritanical manner. Quite interestingly, if they are locked in a mortal combat and not synthesized, the triumph of the first strand may result in a fatal wound on the ANC Youth League. That is, should the idea of autonomy of the ANC Youth League be eroded and an uncritical Youth League be sought out by the ANC, we may end up with a situation in which the ANC Youth League may be permanently disbanded. Of course the long-term spinoffs of this would be dire for the ANC's capacity to self-sustain and regenerate.

### **CHAPTER 3: WHAT OF ORGANISATIONAL RENEWAL?**

#### *Debating the idea of 'organs of civic oversight'*

75. It is in the interests of the ANCYL and all its members for the organisation to establish and sustain a culture of organisational democracy. This is true because the unity and cohesion of the organisation, and thus its capacity to pull collectively as one army in pursuit of the tasks of struggle, rest in large measure on the ability of the ANCYL to practically and truly impress on the minds of its members and the public at large that it conducts its political and organisational affairs in a thoroughly democratic manner; affording all and sundry an open opportunity to express their views without undue restriction and intimidation.
76. In this regard, our organisational systems and institutional mechanisms should always be structured in a manner that maximizes the possibility of democratic exchanges. This must mean that we constantly pursue an organisational renewal that incrementally improves our capacity to secure membership participation in decision making, a true demonstration of collective leadership and to guarantee freedom of dissent within the reasonable bounds of democratic centralism.

77. There is a strategic need for us to build efficient organisational machinery that will be better positioned to pursue the political tasks of the ANC Youth League. Our organization must systematically strengthen its structures and improve the mechanisms used to facilitate political discourse that is progressive. Our structures and systems do not and should not exist for the sake of existence, but rather to maximize our organisational presence in all the spaces that need progressive political activism.
78. For us to master these above mentioned tasks, it will depend on our capacity to constantly grasp the objective political environment within which our organization functions. By this, it is meant that we must have the theoretical means to reflect on the ever changing political situation around us and the attendant challenges that emerge with these changes.
79. This is because each political epoch carries unique features that, in turn, generate unique challenges to the movement as it grapples with the tasks of advancing the national democratic revolution. The organisational systems and structures that emerged from one epoch may be inadequate in dealing with challenges of a new epoch, at least not in a manner that maximizes the effectiveness of the organization in leading transformation.
80. Thus, our grappling with organisational renewal has got to concretely interpret the post 1994 political environment and its various elements that impose unique challenges on our organisational systems and practices. It is incumbent on us to develop a strategic understanding of the dynamics imposed on the ANC Youth League by the very fact of the ANC's hold of state power.
81. The ANC's ascendancy into the levers of government presented a wide range of opportunities for our members to join the bureaucracy of the state, do business with the state etc. This in turn poses the question: what pressures does this situation exert on our organizations, the ANC and the ANC Youth League, given the inevitable competition for ascendancy to positions in the state and our structures in light of the new material incentives attached to these positions?
82. This situation drawn above presents the ANC Youth League with a mirage of challenges, most of which have to do with our organization being vulnerable to capture by various forces determined to improve their material fortunes with it. Quite importantly though is for us to find the best question to ask ourselves regarding these challenges, in order for us to draw out the best possible solution in response.



83. In this regard we may very well pose the question: what exactly is the core organisational challenge facing the ANC Youth League, 20 years into ANC governance? Quite frankly the answer to this question is not that there is a perverse culture of membership buying in the ANC YL, neither is it the fact that there is membership gate keeping. It is also not the fact that there are bogus branches that emerge for conferences nor is it the fact that BGMs are convened in briefcases and at the back of car boots.
84. The core challenge that the ANC Youth League is confronting is the fact that our organisational systems and general organisational machinery are currently designed in a manner that allows for all the backward practices mentioned above to take place. The essential point to grasp here is that we cannot moralise our challenges and simply appeal to the consciences of wrong-doers.
85. What we need to consider in light of these degenerate practices is a variety of means through which we can increase the systematic demands for a branch to qualify in order to be in good standing. If we place a number of strict political demands on a branch, related to organisational work, we may achieve the twin outcomes of warding off manipulation whilst systematically pushing branches to do necessary political work in their wards. But how do we imagine these possible new organisational demands to function?
86. Supposedly, our organisational work and constitutional structuring must be premised on our understanding of the nature of an ever evolving political landscape. In this regard, our organisational systems must be structured in a manner that improves our capacity to interface advantageously with whatever emergent political challenges.
87. In this context, the manner in which our organisational systems are structured determines the extent to which we can be politically efficient in confronting and overcoming different challenges. The question that emerges from this thus becomes; have we successfully understood the political exigencies of the current political epoch in a manner that has led us to have responsive organisational systems?
88. South Africa continues to be plagued by a recurring wave of service delivery protests, particularly in township and rural communities. We have been treated to stories of delays in the delivery of services as well as study material in certain schools, leading to the most vicious onslaught against our government and the ANC broadly. All of these inefficiencies occur despite the fact that we have an organisational presence in almost every corner of this country.

89. Of course a simplistic analysis of these protests would limit itself to objective weaknesses, without accounting for an intervening opportunism and instances of deliberate sabotage. However, these possibilities notwithstanding, these very protests are an indictment on our capacity as organisational structures to act as organs of civil power, exercising oversight on government deliveries and as instruments of communicating concrete government plans and targets that have been met.
90. Although fuzzy in the here and now, the debate that we are provoking is related to the possibility of instituting constitutional amendments that enforce the performance of monitoring and communication work. This is with regards the matter of our structures keeping inventories of schools, clinics, roads, and water and electric services in their wards. These inventories must contain details of material: books, desks, personnel and enrollment numbers for schools; nursing staff, doctor visits, medication availability etc for clinics; radius of settlements around water taps/general availability of water, state of roads infrastructure, electricity and housing etc.
91. Within this logic, the intention would be to direct internal discourse amongst our local (branch) structures to be rooted on the concrete questions of delivery in wards. This necessarily will impose the duty of engaging municipal structures to deliver on the exact shortages of service delivery in a continuous manner. Platforms like the municipal IDPs would have politically gauged outcomes since our structures would have compiled a concrete inventory of urgent tasks.
92. As an ongoing exercise, an inventory of this sort enables the branch to gauge progress and the effectiveness of deployed cadres and the very institutions of governance in their localities. Our organisational capacity to report as the ANC and the ANC Youth League on the interventions of government in local areas would be enhanced as well. Of course difference over leadership preferences may very well be rooted, whether pretentiously or otherwise, on a platform of concrete deliverables.
93. Regarding all of this, two strategic questions of reflection emerge. Firstly, one may ask whether these civic tasks are necessarily constitutional functions or they are generic things that should be inherent in our work as a function of 'political consciousness'. Can the constitution or its annexure(s) be as prescriptive on the daily running of the organization as this proposal is suggesting?

94. The real thing to point out in this regard would be the 'actuality' of things against what 'should' be. This is also corroborated by the other conceptual question of what exactly is the relationship between the constitution and the need to advance political objectives.
95. The indisputable fact we have come to know is that the constitution and other related organisational packages are instruments that place organisational development in a definite context. Thus, they evolve dependent on the prevailing contradictions of a given political moment. Precisely because of this fact, we must consider what exactly should be the unique features of a constitutional package of a party in government when dealing with its everyday functions.
96. Secondly, if we are to agree on whatever constitutional amendments or annexure additions that reinforce this idea we must confront the idea of effective monitoring and enforcement. If these civic tasks become a basis of organisational status, how would we know that a branch has effectively performed these tasks sufficiently for them to be in good standing? Related to the overlapping monitoring functions of governance structures and the branch, how do we ascertain whether engagement has taken place between a branch and, as an example, the ANC caucus in a city council or directly with the council on the basis of the inventory details?
97. This thus raises the question of the oversight role of sub-regions/zones and the Regional Executive Committees. The extent to which these interventions succeed would be dependent on our capacity to outline an effective process of organisational mandate restructuring for our regional structures. This would also present a new possible relationship between the ANC caucuses in councils and our structures on the ground.
98. As earlier suggested, the extended effect of strengthening our constitutional demands on branches would be warding off the element of manipulation. With efficient monitoring systems, the looseness with which bogus branches could be setup would greatly be rolled back. Other than paid membership and a BGM, we would have an engaged requirement of observable organisational work and a series of BGMs as requisite for qualification. The technical price for manipulation would be increased by a serious notch. This would stabilize things for a while until the criminal elements find other means to work around the system!
99. Consideration of these questions will enable us to have historic policy outcomes in our next National Congress, including agitating for radical organisational reforms in the ANC itself. This is

so because the success of organisational reforms in the ANC Youth League would necessarily have to be complemented by similar reforms in the ANC.

## **SUMMARY: SCENARIO SETTING**

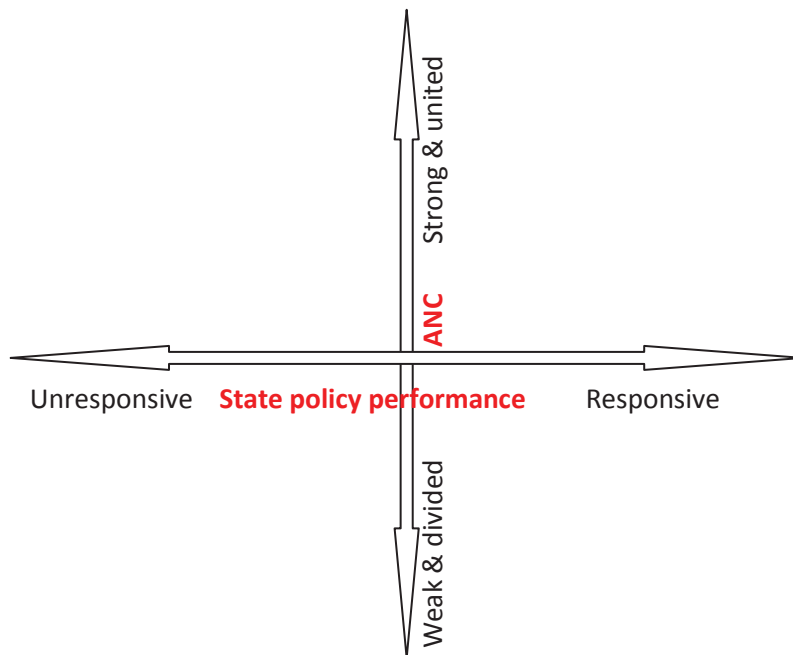
100. The African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) will turn 100 years old in 2044. By that time, the African National Congress (ANC) will have turned 132 years old in January the same year. In what state, shape, form and size will the ANCYL be thirty (30) years from now? What are the critical uncertainties and factors that are likely to shape the desired and unknown futures of the ANCYL?
101. This paper sought to reassert the historical relationship between the ANC and the ANCYL; the ANCYL derives its existence from the ANC and while it is important that the current and future membership of the ANCYL must insist on its autonomy, it is critical that adventures into attempting ideological and political independence are not only avoided but scorned as well.
102. The coming 25<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the ANCYL will in all likelihood reaffirm the incontestability of the birth of the ANCYL from the womb of the ANC. This reality, necessarily, means that the future of the ANCYL is inseparable from the future of the ANC. The question that the membership of the ANCYL must grapple with is whether it is possible to have a strong ANCYL within the predominantly weakened, divided and factionalised ANC and vice-versa. The ANC and its future therefore constitute the first critical uncertainty that will have a direct bearing on the future of the ANCYL.
103. Will the ANC govern for eternity? While the affirmative answer to this question is our collective desire as the movement, we certainly do not know. Let us assume that it does, will the state continue its current developmental trajectory or will it slide into predatory orientation, depending of the balance of contradictions within the movement, society and the globe? Should the ANC lose power, what do we re-perceive as its role in post-apartheid South Africa and subsequently that of the ANCYL? Will the loss of political power be merely a result of the growing disapproval of our mismanagement of public trust or will it also translate into the rejection of our transformative and developmental ideology?

104. The proposition made here is that the ANC leadership of the state and its ability to respond to the needs of citizens, particularly the youth as the dominant stratum of our society, is and will continue to have influence on the strength or lack thereof of the ANCYL. This relationship is obviously complex and is not based on linearity typology. If anything, South African society reflects complexity at best and it is thus not easy make predictions. However, scenarios are essentially about “mythic” stories that are plausible and about agitating our organisational capacity to think the unthinkable. The ANC-State nexus is therefore presented as the framework within which we attempt re-perceive the plausible futures of the ANCYL when it turns 100 years old.

**FLESHING OUT SCENARIOS**

Cul-desac

Free way



Abyss

Gravel Road

**Free Way**

105. This scenario represents the desired and ideal future for the ANCYL. The organisation is rooted in activism with a clear program of action that responds to the twin task of rallying young people behind the banner of the ANC and will have cemented itself as the uncontested leader of youth development in the country and in the continent.

106. As it turns 100 years old, the ANCYL will boast at least 1 million members, with functional, activist branches whose existence is not congress-inspired. All members and structures are continuously inducted and taken to regular political schools. The ANCYL serves as a political school and a home of young revolutionary and most disciplined democrats and is the brain station of the ANC. With regard to the state, it is able to reinforce the ANC through frank discussions on the quality of policies and discipline of implementation of those policies.

107. In this role, the ANCYL reaffirms its role as a leader of youth and vanguard of the youth of the country. As part of its organisational machinery to assert its influence over battle of ideas, the ANCYL will have its own Think Tank to conduct research and development on public policy work and long term development.

108. In this scenario, the ANCYL benefits from the sound state of the ANC and healthy relations. The challenge for the organisation is to develop the necessary political capacity and administrative dexterity so that its successes do not generate new problems from within, therefore weakening its capacity as a leader of young progressives.

### **Gravel Road**

109. The ANCYL is able to satisfactorily perform its political and organisational work. However, it is affected by the weak ANC as a result of factionalism and divisions. Organisationally, it retains most of the characteristics in the first scenario. However, these do not last long as individual leaders, members and hierarchical structures begin to side with individual members, leaders and structures of the ANC on the basis of personal relationships, patronage and/or regionalism.

110. There is an emergence of repulsive and debilitating practices of gate-keeping, selective application of discipline, buying of membership, rigged electoral processes and all other tendencies that subvert the very essence of the ANCYL. The quantitative strength of the

organisation is not affected by these repulsive sub-cultures in part because the ANCYL continues to be the reservoir of the hopes of young South Africans although its image is gradually tainted. The internal ANC problems do not affect state performance in responding to the development needs of the citizens, perhaps owing to a combination of favourable exogenous factors as well as technical and administrative capacity that embodies a developmental state. In governance context, the ANCYL continues to carry out its work of policy advocacy and constructive criticism of the ANC. Gradually, the ANC strife affects both the ANCYL as well as state performance as the ructions spill all over the place.

### **Cul-de-sac**

111. The ANCYL is doing well as the political youth formation of the ANC in relation to its twin task. While both the ANC and ANCYL continue relative internal political and organisational stability, the exogenous factors inhibit the performance of public policy.
112. This situation breeds ground for external organised and popular disenchantment with the state and consequentially the ANC as the leader of the unresponsive state. Delivery of services is seriously scaled down; businesses struggle and choose to either retrench some staff or completely shut down.
113. The worsening of social and economic conditions challenges the position of the ANC and its structures as a leader of society. Social compact that will have held our society together collapse and both the ANC and the state lose legitimacy in the face of lack of clarity of thought on how to respond to the social crisis.
114. The ANC and the ANCYL are at loggerheads on how best to deal with the policy inertia. The ANCYL chooses to publicly contradict the ANC on policy issues and this results in consequential disbandment of the ANCYL. The ANCYL loses its radical voice imperative to the National Democratic Revolution; it only exists in name but it is effectively reduced to a desk of the ANC. The clamping down on the ANCYL leads to its relevance being questioned; reactions to its taming vary, breeding new grounds for divisions and consideration of a splinter party.

## **Abyss**

115. This is the extreme scenario that is possible regarding the future of the ANCYL, which must be deliberately avoided by all members and cadres of the movement, including leaders of the ANC. Defined as an “unending awfulness” and “bottomless pit”, this scenario will mean an effective demise of the ANCYL.
116. It will come as a result of the failure of the ANCYL to resolve the problems in Cul-de-sac. In this situation, the organisation reflects “The Will to Die” syndrome. There is no centre holding; total anarchy is loosed upon the organisation as both the ANC and the state are failing. If it is still in existence, the ANC is in opposition with only a shadow of its former self. Because those in the ANC see no need for Leagues, the ANCYL is dissolved as a matter of necessity. South African state degenerates into a failed state. There is an emergence of the new alternative as a beacon of hope for the South African youth and citizens. Can the ANC regenerate itself? If it does, what will be the role of the ANCYL in the 50-years old democracy?

## **CONCLUSION**

117. As we approach the 25<sup>th</sup> National Congress we need to pursue these broad thematic questions raised above as the overriding context of political discussions within the ANCYL. The purpose of this discussion document is precisely to serve as a ‘base document’ from which specific theoretical and organisational questions will be further developed into separate discussion documents as part of the 25<sup>th</sup> National Congress package.
118. It is not difficult to conclude that each chapter of this document is capable (and should necessarily do so!) of producing a discussion document dedicated to such subject in detail. This is true given the fact that all that this discussion document sets out to do is really to tease out the more strategic questions that must be central to our discourses in the present moment.
119. In the medium term, we will derive from these discussions separate continual papers on ‘ideological, political and cultural renewal’; ‘Renewal of our organisational machinery’; and a focused theoretical undertaking of the grand historic debate of ‘organisational and political autonomy’.



120. It would be very progressive if this very base document could induce a series of internal theoretical exchanges amongst our members so that the development of discussion papers in the long run could be reflective the prevalent intellectual tendencies amongst members.

121. The nature of this discussion document is motivated by the need not to assert one perspective but to rather establish the historical and ideological context within which a variety of perspectives must contend. After all, it is Chairman Mao who instructively shared with us that for the health of the revolution: ***'let a hundred flowers bloom and let a hundred schools of thought contend!'***

## **DEFINING A GENERATIONAL MISSION FOR THE YOUTH: REPOSITIONING THE ANCYOUTH LEAGUE IN GLOBAL YOUTH STRUGGLES**

*Human affairs proceed in their intricate, endlessly varied, and unpredictable paths, but occasionally events occur that are taken to be sharp turning points in history – Noam Chomsky, 2010.*

### **SECTION A: CHARACTER OF YOUTH AND THE GLOBAL YOUTH MOVEMENT**

1. All over the world, the youth inspire hope, renewal and prospects for change. However, often times, some sections of mainstream media and even adults, have attempted to project the youth in a negative sense.
2. Throughout much of recent history, social descriptions such as 'lost generation', 'youth cult', psychological categories such as 'juvenile delinquency', 'deviant', 'loafers', 'hooligans', 'cowboys', 'rebellious' and even 'gangsters'; girls behaving *badly* regarded as 'loose' or 'wicked women' and, in the parlance of neoliberal economics, 'risky' and lately in South Africa, the latter-day-born youths are regarded vaguely as 'born-frees'. With so many pejoratives, it is no surprise that the modern state has been preoccupied with building a 'good citizen', in clear reference to the youth.
3. The definition of youth varies across societies, communities, cultures and geography. It remains very problematic and contentious to universalise a single definition of youth owing to the objective reality of a diverse world. Some societies, like South Africa, for practical reasons relating to 'targeted public policy', opt for the legal route: defining youth according to *age*

*categories*. More than anything, culture and the dynamics of transition between childhood and adulthood combine to make a single universal definition of 'youth' impossible. At a principle and theoretical level, the ANC Youth League should not spend a lot of time debating the definition of 'youth'. Nonetheless, in a general sense, we suggest that being 'youth' is to be in the *transient stage* between childhood and adulthood in the life-cycle.

4. Is it possible to **characterise** the youth and do so across time and space? Yes, it is possible. For purposes of this discussion, it is advisable to avoid stretching time to as far back as antiquity. It is rather better to look at the youth since the end of the Second World War (WW II) for two reasons: firstly, it is sufficient a time to observe discernable historical trends without a long-winded history, secondly, the world constructed as a result of and after the WW II; is still very much intact politically and culturally.
5. Is there a **global character** of youth? Is there a character of youth struggles? The answer is yes and no. Theoretically we already know that, all youth, across time and space are a *transient stratum* in society. They tend to be the most agile, energetic and a potential potent force for revolutionary change in society. But we also know that not all youths have been progressive.
6. On the other hand, it would be fair to say that the *character of youth or youth movements* varies from one condition to another, and so are youth struggles. Moreover, since the 1950s, it has increasingly become difficult to make a distinction between youth struggles and broader societal struggles for two reasons: first, young people have led many struggles leading to revolutionary changes in whole societies. Secondly, if we agree that youth are a *transient stratum*, then the youth are justified to project and construct their future today. In other words, it is a mistake to isolate youth struggles as if they are abstract struggles detached from societies where both the young and old coexist.
7. Examples abound of young people who inspired generations and whole societies to move forward: John Langalibalele Dube, who became the first president of the ANC at the age of 41, had already attained laudable achievements such as setting up the legendary Ohlange High School at 30. Sol Plaatjie became the first secretary general of the ANC at 35 and already in his 20s, he was a renowned writer and editor; and Charlotte Maxeke led the anti-pass campaign in 1913 at 39 years of age, she had emerged as South Africa's first woman BSc graduate, as an organiser of the Women's Mite Missionary Society and established a training college in

Evaton. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart who, when he died in 1791 at 35 had become, arguably, one of the greatest musicians of all time; or Phillip Tabane of Malombo fame who started making an impression in South African jazz as barely a teenager...Or Steve “Kalamazoo” Mokone who, at 17 made football history as the first black player to play in a professional European league; or our current captain, Aaron Mokoena who debuted in Bafana Bafana at 18 and became captain at 23 years of age. We can add Dr Chris Barnard who at 32 had acquired his doctorate in medicine and set out to start experiments that led to the first human heart transplant...or even [Isaac Newton](#) and his work on mathematical calculus at 23. Furthermore, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, for their exploits in their twenties in liberating Cuba; Karl Marx who by the age of 30, together with Friedrich Engels, had written many books on human development and social organisation, including the *Communist Manifesto*; or Moses Kotane who became general secretary of the Communist Party of South Africa at 34 years of age<sup>1</sup>.

## **SECTION B: CONTEMPORARY HISTORY AND YOUTH STRUGGLES: UNDERSTANDING THE RESURGENCE OF YOUTH RADICALISM**

8. The modern world as we know it has largely been shaped by the political *French Revolution* (1789), and *British Industrial Revolution* (1848). Before this period, about three centuries earlier, China, Japan and India were well ahead of Europe in terms of development. In fact, by 1800, *China and India were the two leading economies in the world*<sup>2</sup>. Competition over natural resources and markets, violence and war, conquest of territories, gave birth to new power and cultural relations and realities in the world. Politically and economically, the Euro-American nations began to lead in many spheres of life and with it, came to dominate world affairs.
9. Fast-forward to the aftermath of WW II; not only was the focus on reconstruction and peace, but the ‘growth and affluence’ of especially, the developed nations of the world. In part, the arms race that followed during the Cold War, introduced new forms of science and technology. In this period, security meant military might. At the same time, the ongoing modernisation project was redefining production at the industrial shop floor level, shaping discourses of knowledge, creating new cultures – in one word – the victors, were constructing a world in their own image.

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<sup>1</sup> Netshitenzhe, J. Youth are leaders of today, not just tomorrow, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Jacques, M. When China rules the world, 2012.

10. In underdeveloped and colonial societies, different realities prevailed. Foremost in these regions of the world, was to get rid of colonialism and all other oppressive systems. For Africans, liberation and African unity was the primary goal. And in the forefront of these struggles were young people such as Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Amilcar Cabral, Frantz Fanon and Jomo Kenyatta, among others in their generation. This is the generation that would later come to lead the continent at independence, form the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and promote the ideals of Pan-Africanism. So, in a way, the formal decolonisation process which came as a consequence of triumphant national liberation struggles, represented the decline of empires as we have known them in the period before 1945 and late 1950s.
11. For example, the African student movement in colonial settings, organised against '*deculturation and depersonalisation*' of the African. So, even youth formations, outside the youth-wings of liberation movements, recognised the centrality of national liberation struggles and the importance of restoring the human dignity of Africans.
12. The post-World War II period saw the dawn of a new political culture: open mass and radical resistance/protests. Peace and civil rights movements emerged in the United States, recently liberated territories and in occupied territories. In Alabama, the United States, the civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King Jr, enlisted students in 1963 to wage struggles against racial segregation.
13. In Latin America, the victory of the July 26<sup>th</sup> Movement against the Batista regime in Cuba; the victory of communists in China. The Diaz Ordaz regime in Mexico was also brought to its knees when student youth, organised around democratic demands, won the sympathies of the masses in 1968.
14. In Asia, Burmese struggles against the military junta since 1962 have involved students and youth led by the National League for Democracy of Aung San Suu Kyi. The downfall of the authoritarian Ayub Khan regime in Pakistan was sparked off by student unrest in that country in the late 1960s.
15. The gains scored by the anti-colonial movement in Algeria were some of the key historic moments informing youth radicalisation. In Ghana, the 1948 Accra Riots informed a new wave of radical nationalist politics.
16. In Europe, we recall the youth and student uprising in France May 1968. This uprising led by the French revolutionary communist youth organisation Jeunesses Communistes Revolutionnaires

(JCR). This movement was later joined by workers and sparked a serious political challenge to the authoritarian de Gaulle regime. In Czechoslovakia, the student movement played a significant role as a detonator in the struggle for socialist democracy in 1968.

17. At the beginning of the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, notable youth struggles can be recounted too: in South Africa in 1976, students opposed to racist education policies and inspired by black consciousness among other ideas, took the Apartheid system head on. It has also been suggested that the independence of Angola and Mozambique played a radicalising role in the youth movement in South Africa in the 1970s. Again in China, students in 1989 marched into Tiananmen Square demanding reforms from the Communist Party and thousands were massacred and the list is endless.
18. Recently, we know of progressive anti-globalisation struggles in the world. The anti-globalisation movement is not *per se* anti-technical progress or new and faster ways of travel, communicating and interacting; but more about challenging and changing the social content and direction of globalisation to favour underdeveloped societies in a quest to create an equitable world order where both burdens and fruits of globalisation are equitably shared. The anti-globalisation struggles are about human development. In this regard, struggles of youth have found expression in platforms such as the World Social Forum. The Occupy Movement in the Wall Street of New York and the recent spate of protest against the rising cost of education (student debt) across the world, have also added to the long list of struggles in which the youth have occupied the forward trenches.
19. We also know that the place of youth in history is not only in the space of politics. Culturally, youth have often been on the forward trenches of cultural revolutions and setting trends socially. In the 1950s, not only did youth temper with the 'Victorian culture and mores' that governed traditional gender roles, marriage and the 'nucleus family', but they also became an attractive market for commercial brands and lifestyle consumables such clothes, music, radio, television and other household items, hence the label of 'youth pop culture'. In the United States (US), opposition to the Vietnam War came largely from the youth, to the surprise of some parents who saw the behaviour of youth as deviant.
20. In South Africa in the early 1990s, as it was in the US in the 1970s when rap music emerged in the ghettos, a *counter-culture* of Kwaito music emerged in the townships to define a new youthful lifestyle, probably building in the previous generations' *marabi*, *pantsula*, *tsotsi-taal*

and *kwela* subcultures. In other words, young people inspire change in many facets of life, not only in politics. The 'Victorian' modernist worldview was clearly under attack even as youth debated issues around sexual freedom, same sex lifestyles, multiple partners and so on.

21. The current youth struggles in many regions of world must be understood in the context of the ongoing deepening crisis of capitalism and its neoliberal offshoot. Increasingly, capitalist development is being challenged on the shop floor, in the streets, through cultural revolutions and in boardrooms. In recent times, the highest point of crisis for capitalist development was the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. For progressive movements across the world, the crisis presented opportunities for change and for alternative public policy. However, there is consensus that the international Left movement in particular, has not fully taken advantage of the crisis. Proponents of neoliberal policies continue to be bold and stubborn.

### **SECTION C: ORGANISATIONAL EXPRESSION OF YOUTH STRUGGLES AND THE POSITIONING OF THE ANC YOUTH LEAGUE**

22. In organisational forms, the *counter-culture* of the first 25 years (1945-1970), gave rise to ideological contestations in youth and student formations. In addition, the Cold War environment increased the tempo of this contestation.
23. For example, in the progressive international student movement organised under the International Union of Students (IUS), opposition to imperial wars and aggression in Vietnam saw young people taking centre stage. In the progressive international youth movement, the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) established in 1945, adopted a peace agenda and an anti-imperialist and anti-colonial stance. Both IUS and WFDY identified with and supported anti-colonial struggles across the world. At the time, WFDY represented about 30 million youths in 63 countries. The WFDY and IUS respectively, built organisational strength and prominence on the proud history and traditions laid by the International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY), formed in 1907 as Socialist Youth international (SYI), primarily to organise various democratic socialist youth organisations across the world. Although faced with challenges of one kind or another, these organisations continue to exist.
24. On the other hand, at the height of ideological warfare in the Cold War era, other formations to the right of the ideological spectrum emerged. Among others, the pro-Western World Assembly of Youth (WAY), an offshoot of WFDY, was formed in 1949 to represent the worldview of the

- Western allies and liberal youth. And so was the International Student Conference (ISC), which split from IUS in 1948 formed to represent by and large, the Western liberal tradition of politics.
25. South Africa and the ANC Youth League(SA) in particular,has since the Youth Desk days in exile played a significant role in international youth organisations of the Left tradition. In recent years, this role was expressed in the election of the ANC Youth League (SA) into the presidium of the IUSY. The former President of the ANC Youth League, Comrade FikileMbalula waselected President of IUSY in 2004 and in 2012, the organisation was nominated again<sup>3</sup>.
  26. Again South Africa made history when the ANC Youth League hosted the 17<sup>th</sup> World Festival of Youth and Students. Sadly, the importance, symbolism and achievements of the Festival were overshadowed by poor organisation and therefore bad media coverage. The mainstream media, most reactionary in character, took advantage of the disorganisation and decided to oppose the Festival. Consequently, both the public and the youth were misinformed about WFDY, the successful international struggles waged over years, the unique nature of the tradition of Festivals as a political tradition, why was South Africa selected as hosts. Instead of boosting the image of the organisation (ANC Youth League), the Festival projected us badly.In the aftermath of the Festival and its bad coverage, the organisation did little to convey the outcomes of the Festival and the achievements registered. Overall, the Festival became a wasted opportunity.
  27. Again in the African continent, the ANC Youth League is regarded as a strategic and reliable youth formation in relation to youth development and politics. Until recently, the Presidency of thePan-African Youth Union (PYU) was held by South Africa and the ANC Youth League, former Deputy President of the ANC Youth League Comrade AndileLungisa served as President. This had positioned the youth of South Africa at the centre of political changes and process in Africa. We were in a position to make a humble contribution to realise the many strategic objectives that Africa has set herself, including among others; the renaissance of Africa, real Pan-African unity and helping break the shackles of neo-colonialism, etc.
  28. The ANC Youth League’s increased participation and leading role in some of WFDY events is also a clear sign of commitment to anti-imperialist struggles. WFDY is generally regarded as the most advanced global expression of anti-imperialist struggles by the youth.

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<sup>3</sup> For more information about the role and participation of the ANC Youth League in the progressive international youth movement, refer to the Discussion Document on International Relations.

29. The most promising characteristic of this anti-imperialist posture is the rebirth of internationalism and a realisation that the struggles of the oppressed in South Africa and around the world are interlinked. This provides a real possibility for the youth to openly identify with working class struggles pursued in different areas of the world.
30. In the 24<sup>th</sup> National Conference, the ANC Youth League made the observation that although the IUSY is geared towards building solidarity amongst socialist youth in the world based on cooperation, common mobilisation and success for socialism; its experience in the body led it to conclude that it is 'somewhat inclined to the liberal agenda, with the organisation refusing to take up positions which are progressive [simply because they] may compromise the agenda of certain states and regions'.

#### **SECTION D: THE CHANGING GLOBAL BALANCE OF FORCES: IS AN ALTERNATIVE WORLD ORDER EMERGING?**

31. Changes to the world can only come from below and be reinforced by international solidarity of all progressive forces throughout the world. Since the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989, the global balance of power shifted further in favour of the Euro-American bloc. For the past two decades, the US has been the sole hyper-power in global affairs. In its quest for dominance, it has been increasing its power and influence militarily, politically, economically and culturally. The recent wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and sponsored coups in Venezuela, Ivory Coast, Egypt and elsewhere in the world, are an expression and an extension of Euro-American power, and in particular, the 'preponderance' grand strategy of the US. The result of these policies - 'unilateralism', 'militarisation of diplomacy', 'pre-emptive war' - is a world which has increasingly become unpeaceful and unstable. Ironically, this order of things constitutes a simultaneously threat to world peace and an opportunity for mobilising for a better world based on the best of human values.
32. In the same period, Africa has been experiencing positive developments in the same period. We have more democratic regimes than before, development indicators are pointing towards an improving quality of life, a positive narrative of 'Africa as the new growth frontier' is emerging, our demographic profile indicates that we have a younger population, peace and stability is on the rise. Indeed many challenges remain and the possibility of regress in some areas is present



but; there has been a lot of progress politically, culturally, economically and socially, more than in the 1950s.

33. Although heroic but not entirely revolutionary, the North African uprisings led mostly by the youth, aided by social media etc, particularly in Tunisia and Egypt, are something worth celebrating and studying.
34. Although the US and its Western allies are still dominating global politics, the re-emergence of Asia in the form of China and India and the shift in economic power to the South more broadly, Latin America included, point towards changing global balances of power. This historic moment presents all progressive individual and movements to increase the tempo towards achieving a just and humane world. As the power of the US declines, so shall we see desperate attempts to hold onto power. In this contest between the dominant powers and the merging powers, Africa must not sit idle but must play its strategic role to shape a new world order.

#### **The case of Latin American struggles**

35. Whereas European Socialist parties have suffered electoral defeat in recent years, the trend in Latin America is different. The region has seen the election of Left-leaning governments in the period leading to the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and immediately after. These developments present a possible countervailing power in the region and in the world and; inevitably, a direct challenge to Western imperialism and dominance.
36. Imperialism continues to face resistance on the economic, social and cultural fronts in countries like Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia. The ALBA Alliance and its model of development has shown that there are possibilities for a democratic and revolutionary development paths based on social justice, national sovereignty and independence from the dictatorship of global banks and corporations.
37. US destabilisation efforts of Left-leaning governments through sponsoring successful and unsuccessful coups in Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia and the Honduras are a clear indication of the desperation of imperialism. On the other hand, these frontiers of alternative development paths are an inspiration to many underdeveloped countries and the youth in particular. The youth has witnessed all these events and has become familiar with the US destruction of the Cuban economy and its revolution through the inhumane economic blockade that has been in place for almost five decades.

38. To some extent, the youth movement has come to appreciate these countries as international focal points and theatres of struggle against US imperialism and military aggression.

#### **SECTION E: KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING THE YOUTH TODAY**

39. In the global South, many opportunities and challenges arise in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The opportunity presented by demographic dividend of 'youth bulge' is both a blessing and curse, depending on how those societies treat the youth. Institutions such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank estimate that half of the world's population is under the age of 25.
40. The youth that are not in education, not in employment or training (NEETs) are potential for social instability. But inclusive societies which offer their youth opportunities to realise their potential, stand to benefit from the demographic dividend of a 'youth bulge'. That is why young people all over the world are engaged in various struggles of social uplift and economic transformation.
41. The old assumptions that youth are 'incomplete social actors or subjects less able to exert agency in the face of globalisation' is just a complete fallacy. In the mainstream, youth are 'often dismissed for lack of civic engagement, or attacked for being disruptive. Yet disruption of oppressive laws, norms and practices is a crucial aspect of all liberatory movements'.
42. Away from traditional societies of previous generations, modern society makes it possible that more often than not, today's generations of youth spend more time at school, work or in the community more than at home. Indeed, new forms of communication and technologies have increased the tempo of this change process.

#### **What of weaknesses in the youth movement?**

43. Besides resource limitations and poor coordination, it is possible that youth formations and leaders particularly in post-colonial societies suffer from weaknesses of *sectoral interests capture* in service of incumbent political elites and established interests, be they local or international. In Nigeria, the youth movement has suffered from the phenomenon of *Godfatherism*: a situation whereby youth leaders use the organisation to fulfil desires and ambitions of more senior leaders who act as their Godfathers and influence the direction behind the scenes through patronage.

44. In our context, the integrity of youth organisations is mortgaged to individual and factional interests of some of its members thus weakening the organisation. Incidents of gatekeeping, improperly convened and managed congresses resulting in structures whose legitimacy is questioned erode the capacity of the ANC Youth League to command respect and support within society more broadly and its constituency in particular.
45. Failure to rapidly observe, understand and communicate changes, challenges and opportunities presented by 21<sup>st</sup> century society, is a function of poor capacity in the ranks of the youth movement. More international exposure, relations and exchanges can help improve capacity, knowledge and skills base.

#### **SECTION F: WHAT IS THE GENERATIONAL MISSION?**

46. There is a general sense that an alternative world order; one which is more humane, just and equitable is in the offing. This possibility is not by chance but due to the crisis of capitalist development and struggles of the poor of the world over time.
47. The ANC Youth League has a revolutionary duty to position South African youth to play a meaningful role in constructing an alternative world order. Indeed the ANC Youth League must continue to position itself as a mass youth movement aligned with the Left forces of the world.
48. The generational mission of the progressive global youth movement is varied in nature and intensity, depending on the stage of development and geography. However, there is convergence on the following:
  - a. Bring about social justice especially for the working class and the poor. That means build human solidarity, end poverty, reduce inequality, improve the quality of life and protect the environment, in a word, improve the human condition.
  - b. Build a politically a new global balance of power. That means de-concentrating power from one state or bloc, transforming multilateralism and ending wars.
  - c. Release the creative potential of the people and realise cultural freedom of all peoples.
  - d. Restore belief in the youth.
49. In a word: **Improve the human condition in our lifetime!**

**END.**

# REBUILDING A NEW CADRE

*Debating the qualities of an ANCYL cadre in this 'Decade of a Cadre'*

## Introduction

1. In the end, if we ask the question: who comes first between the member and the organization, we will certainly get a wrong answer. In the establishment, sustenance and life of any organization there exists an endless, uninterrupted dialectical relationship between the membership and the organization. In other words, there can be no organization without members and equally, members are members because they belong to an organization in the first place; otherwise they are just private individuals.
2. The correct question that will ultimately lead to a correct answer is: how important is it for the membership to understand their organization and their role in it in order to build and strengthen the organization and equally the organization has an obligation to build its membership and produce a cadreship that will understand the challenges and tasks of the moment.
3. The challenge of producing a quality cadre is a key subjective matter that faces the National Liberation Movement today like it did in the past and indeed elsewhere in the world. Because all of us have been born into history; it is thus obligatory for us to understand what *history* is. The next task would be to understand what the ANC and its Youth League is and therefore the kind of cadreship it needs. Would the ANCYL need the same type of cadre that existed and operated in the Defiance Campaign of 1952 today? The answer is, NO. The country is now free, the ANC is no more in exile or banned, it is a ruling party. The new conditions of freedom and democracy present certain opportunities and yet at the same time impose certain challenges which the movement as a whole must try to understand and navigate through.
4. Naturally, the question arises: what organization and cadreship would we want to see in a situation in which Apartheid and national oppression is a thing of the past? **The meaning of being an activist under oppression is different from being activist under freedom.** In the past, to be an activist in the liberation movement meant that you “must be ready for death, to go to

jail for a long period of time, to suffer the most cruel forms of torture at the hands of apartheid forces and, to go into exile". But today it may mean a "*better life*" in the crudest sense, indeed in the sense that the opposition normally ridicules our deployed cadres!

5. So, moving forward, the ANCYL as a **political preparatory school** for the ANC carries the greatest responsibility to prepare the next generation of leaders not only for the ANC but, for society as whole.

### **The point of departure**

6. The ANCYL is the youth league of the ANC, the leader of the national liberation movement. Organizationally, the Youth League is autonomous from the ANC but in terms of character, ideology, vision and mission and so on, the Youth League just like the Women's League, are one with the ANC.
7. To understand the character of the Youth League, one must first understand the character of the ANC. The ANC is born out of *history*: dispossession, colonialism, Apartheid, oppression of one human being by another and so on. The *history* into which the ANC emerged must be understood in both national, class and gender terms.
8. The mission of the ANC does not end with the formal defeat of Apartheid in 1994. The vision to create a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa still remains the strategic objective of the ANC as captured in its revolutionary program the National Democratic Revolution (NDR).
9. In summary, the National Democratic Revolution is a thorough-going 'social transformation agenda' to build a society directly opposed in *form and content*; to the evil system of Apartheid, in other words eradicating the legacy of Apartheid and oppression: building a national democratic and caring society!
10. Therefore given the extent of the legacy we refer to above; the tasks that the current phase of the NDR throws at members and activists in the liberation movement are difficult and daunting tasks but; only with a proper characterization and **absolute commitment** will we be in position to navigate through them.

11. If one asks the question: **what kind of a cadre do we need at the moment**; one is by implication asking the question: what kind of an ANC or YL do we need to build in order to successfully defeat poverty, underdevelopment, illiteracy, inequality, disease and so on?

12. To borrow from the Strategy and Tactics (S&T), 2007:

“To carry out the NDR in the current phase requires a **progressive national liberation movement** which:

- a. understands the interconnection between political and socio-economic challenges in our society;
- b. leads the motive forces of the NDR in pursuing their common aspirations and ensuring that their sectoral interests are linked to the strategic objective;
- c. masters the terrain of electoral contest, utilises political power to advance the objectives of the NDR and wields instruments of state in line with these ideals as reflected in the National Constitution;
- d. organises and mobilises the motive forces and builds broader partnerships to drive the process of reconstruction and development, nation-building and reconciliation; and
- e. conducts itself, both in its internal practices and in relation to society at large, in line with the ideals represented by the NDR and **acts as a microcosm of the future**”.

13. Here, the S&T puts clearly and explains in detail the *specific elements* that constitute the character of the liberation movement. The expectation is that, undoubtedly, members, activists and cadres must conduct themselves **consistent with the ‘progressive’ character of the ANC**. The individual character of the members of the Youth League must be one with the ‘progressive’ character of the liberation movement including even in our private spaces and lives. The moment the conduct of a member contradicts the character of the liberation movement, **that member is by definition anti-ANC**. That is what is called anti-ANC behavior.

14. To quote the S&T at length again so as to emphasise the importance and correctness of the point made above:

15. *“The vision that the ANC pursues is informed by the morality of caring and human solidarity. The kind of democracy it pursues leans towards the poor; and it recognises the leading role of the*

*working class in the project of social transformation. Recognising the reality of unequal gender relations, and the fact that the majority of the poor are African women, the ANC pursues gender equality in all practical respects.*

*In this context, the ANC is a disciplined force of the left, organised to conduct consistent struggle in pursuit of a caring society in which the well-being of the poor receives focused and consistent attention. In terms of current political discourse, what it seeks to put in place approximates, in many respects, a combination of the best elements of a developmental state and social democracy. In this regard, the ANC contrasts its own positions with those of:*

- a. national liberation struggles which stalled at the stage of formal political independence and achieved little in terms of changing colonial production relations and social conditions of the poor;*
- b. neo-liberalism which worships the market above all else and advocates rampant unregulated capitalism and a minimalist approach to the role of the state and the public sphere in general; and*
- c. ultra-leftism which advocates voluntaristic adventures including dangerous leaps towards*
- d. a classless society ignoring the objective tasks in a national democratic revolution.*

*In order for it to exercise its vanguard role, the ANC puts a high premium on the involvement of its cadres in all centres of power. This includes the presence of ANC members and supporters in state institutions. It includes activism in the mass terrain of which structures of civil society are part. It includes the involvement of cadres in the intellectual and ideological terrain to help shape the value systems of society. This requires a cadre policy that encourages creativity in thought and in practice and eschews rigid dogma. In this regard, the ANC has a responsibility to promote progressive traditions within the intellectual community, including institutions such as universities and the media. Playing a vanguard role also means the presence of members and supporters of the ANC in business, the better to reshape production relations in line with the outlook of a national democratic society”.*

16. *Organizational renewal* takes place or must take place within this context and through this understanding: **'the vision that the ANC pursues is informed by the morality of caring and human solidarity'**. That is the organization we seek to build and that is the cadreship that this organization must produce. The renewal of the ANC starts with the Youth League for obvious reasons chief among them is the fact that the Youth League must work extra hard to ensure that the rot or rather degeneration does not happen in the first instance in its ranks because; this means there is no future for the ANC as a result. **It would be wrong for the ANCYL to be lazy, conservative, degenerate, factional and so on because; it would imply that Youth League is a 'preparatory school' in which the death of the ANC is orchestrated and certified.**
17. The advantage of the ANC is for history to establish it as the *oldest liberation movement in Africa and the last one to liberate the last oppressed nation in the African continent*. What does this mean in terms of lessons of history in the evolution of liberation movements in the continent? What obligations does this impose of the ANC in the struggle to liberate Africa moving forward? Is it a blessing or a curse? The answer for this one depends on what really you are looking at but, either way we need an answer for this question!
18. **Ultimately, we must avoid the risk of speaking about the kind of cadre we must build in abstract terms removed from reality.** Our task in this discussion is not to see the tasks of building a new cadre in theoretical and hypothetical terms but to concretely ask: **in relation to which organization and what revolutionary project is the cadre modeled?** The cadre we must build must not only reside in our minds but, must be a cadre that will be in a position to characterize history and society, the tasks of the moment and develop ideas and programs to change society. In doing so, that cadre can be said to be building the movement because, it is a cadre at work to change society for the better. The people will see a glorious movement through her noble work.
19. Organizations change when reality changes and thus need ideas, knowledge, skill and a *cadre* that will understand whatever change that is taking place at each stage or moment. The danger arises when the change of reality impacts on the nature and character of the organization unconsciously (without the membership and organization being aware) because; what this



means is that the organization is being impacted upon by reality without recognition or rather appreciation.

20. The organization and its cadreship must be consciously aware of the changing reality on the ground so as to consciously direct and manage both the negative and positive impact the changing reality brings to the nature and character of the organization because indeed failure to do so, will result in the dangerous tendency of the changing reality transforming the organization into something we do not know, instead of the organization transforming reality and making advances in improving the progressive nature of the organization and positioning the organization to lead society better.

### **What then are the challenges of the moment?**

21. There are many challenges or rather tendencies that we need to identify and characterize properly. But it would be better to focus on the more pronounced tendencies of the day given space and time. Below is a limited number of challenges and, some have emerged and established themselves as tendencies that are anti the progressive nature of the liberation movement and thus destructive and, secondly, some of these stated challenges are not necessarily new but; due to their persistent and changing nature, they require emphasis here:

#### *The challenge of state power*

22. The one thing that was absent during apartheid was state power and state resources. Then there was a different discipline. People joined the movement with great sacrifice and cost to their lives. There were few instances where some comrades would abuse power in exile including donor funds etc. And those who were caught were punished severely.
23. But today *corruption, greed and selfishness* have come to characterize the being of some of our members, something that is contrary to the very soul and true character of the movement as a caring, selfless and progressive organization. Many people are almost certain that a membership in the ANC guarantees them a better job, access to tenders including even in corrupt ways,

access to high level state information and key decisions, access to decision-makers, access to state funds and so on. This is based on the reality that the state wields a lot of economic and financial power as the ultimate trustee of the public, the people.

24. So, it appears that we all recite the progressive values of the movement but act daily in our interaction with other cadres, other individuals and companies and so on, to undermine the very value-system that the movement seeks to promote and nurture. In other words, we are not committed and principled, we pretend to be. These result in a fallacious organization: where we all think and assume that we subscribe to the same discipline by virtue of being members of one ANC and yet we are just individuals each with his or her own personal interest and nothing about the ANC or the people we claim to liberate. What then are the consequences of this kind of conduct and on the future of the movement? What does commitment mean in practice? Whereas the answers may not be clear, however, the consequences are clear.

25. People get elected into political office or support a particular candidate with a stated position in mind: that if he/she is chairperson of the region then he/she will be in pole position to be mayor and; we as supporters and campaigners will get to influence this or the other decision on state resources. This is unprincipled support. Leaders who received unprincipled support are then trapped into a patronage and payback lifestyle and it becomes an unending and forever growing vicious circle that devours the movement every second.

*The challenge of poorly trained cadres*

26. One area in which any serious political formation must never fail on is political education, both formal and informal. Political education is the lifeblood of any organization. Even the poorest organization can mount a serious and consistent political education program. These days, those who know do not share but use their political knowledge and experience to take advantage of new, ignorant and learning members.

27. Chairman Mao puts this clearly: “experience proves that some people violate discipline because they do not know what Party discipline is, while others...violate it knowingly and exploit the ignorance of many Party members to achieve their evil ends”.
28. Under current and new conditions we still need **a cadre that will reaffirm the best old traditions of the movement and where necessary, improve the discipline of the organization to respond to current challenges**. One of the best old traditions of the movement is ‘*organizational internal democracy*’ and the following is also advised in the document *Through the Eye of the Needle*: we need to “subordinate the needs of a part to the needs of a whole”. The view of the majority should prevail and the decisions of higher structures must be observed. But the manner in which this is done must be re-examined in the organization. In some instances, there is abuse of this vital principle of democracy which then results in defiance, disunity and instability in the organization. **The experience of conferences that had to be reconvened because there is a case of abuse of democratic principles, procedures and systems is forever growing in the ranks of the League**. Why is that so in a ‘democratic’ organization?
29. Learning is not a static process for both the cadre and the organization. The world is forever changing and therefore; there is a need to update one’s knowledge base constantly otherwise one risks the danger of being irrelevant. So, as Lenin once said; our duty is to “learn, learn and learn”. Can we atleast see discipline towards learning?

*The persistent ‘gender’ challenge*

- 30.** At the center of our struggle for a better life for all is the struggle for the emancipation of women from all forms of patriarchy. From the home-front to all spheres of life, a conscious and dedicated cadre must fight the social exclusion and abuse of women. This means taking up issues and programs that protect and advance the rights and status of women in society. **Higher consciousness dictates that women empowerment is a smaller part of the greater project to emancipate women from national, class and gender oppression.**

31. Whereas a lot of remarkable work has been done in and by government to mainstream issues of women since the advent of democracy, the same cannot be said about dedicated work on gender issues in the organization and our role in engaging society on this critical matter. There has been a decline of political work in this area and this may perpetuate gender stereotypes and domination of men moving forward and this will mean regress.
32. For instance, despite the progress made, why is that in the schooling and university system women are dominant in terms of access but not success? Why is it that the public discourse is dominated by male intellectuals? Why is that, when we speak of child-headed homes it is the girl-child that heads the home? Why is it that most conference papers in the League/movement are presented by male comrades and most meetings chaired by males?
33. What then are the tasks of a conscious and dedicated cadre in relation to the struggle to emancipate women since we all agree that; gender oppression is a cross-cutting social phenomenon which requires the mobilization of all of society and all sectors? What should be the character and conduct of a conscious and committed cadre in relation to these questions?

*The challenge of a dying branch*

34. The basic unit of the organization is on the decline qualitatively and quantitatively both in the ANC and the League. The reason for the decline is a combination of things: The failure to characterize and engage in local day to day struggles of the people and the youth, low levels of political education, factionalism and infighting, involvement of the League in mother-body factional battles etc. The *Organizational Renewal* document suggests that branches become active towards elections and congresses.
35. There has been a fallacious argument that, the reason why the branch is on the decline is because; the branch has been disempowered in the hierarchy of the organization in terms of its political and constitutional role in the recent past. If that is true, why then are there local government challenges plaguing the movement and the country in the presence of branches? Should we not have the branch as the first and effective unit that responds to local problems? Is

it also disempowered at local level? In our view, this maybe a false argument used to defocus the movement from real reasons of the 'dying/declining branch'.

36. The danger is emerging now that in the near future if branches are not given priority (in terms of building and strengthening), we will end up having NECs only without real active branches on the ground (e.g. ZanuPF) and; **the organic nature of how we execute the revolution would be absolutely lost and destroyed.** What is the experience in Zimbabwe?
37. How should the ANC and the Youth League strengthen each other at branch level since we have all accepted that the movement is anchored on branches without which there can be no organization? What quality is the cadre that constitutes this branch? Is the cadre ready for the future that is increasingly complex domestically and globally? How should the Youth League, the future of the ANC and in many ways the future of our country, take care of the ANC? The Youth League must have interest in the affairs of the ANC and vice-versa but, to what extent should this interest be exercised?

*The generational challenge*

38. The changing nature of the demographic profile of our population is a reality that must be factored in our political strategy of mobilization and building consciousness (politicization of the youth). This is a key task facing the Youth League now. The future political support of the ANC will not come from the aging support base but, from the youth of today. But also this imposes the assumption or the obligation that the ANC will and must remain progressive.
39. What then should be the task of the Youth League cadre in relation to this challenge? How does it manifest itself in the ranks of the movement itself? Is it not true that the old exile and UDF generation is aging? How will the transition between the old and the new be handled, indeed the transitional challenge of the young and the old? Already experience shows that the ANC is getting younger every day? What does this mean? Is it not true that some of the internal problems of the movement arise because of failure to characterize and handle this transitional challenge properly?

40. All of these matters and many more need a certain quality of a cadre that must emerge NOW in our ranks!

### **What is to be done?**

41. Our task as the Youth League is clearly cut out in a post-1994 South African society. The glorious history of the League does not allow the kind and pace of degeneration we are witnessing.

**42. What needs to be done is to understand that the task of revolutionaries in a revolution is not only to defend the gains and advances but, that the revolution must also have the capacity to defend itself.**

43. Do we have a cadre that can do that? If we do not, what then must be done?

In conclusion we need to repeat what we said earlier in this document:

44. Organizations change when reality changes and thus need ideas, knowledge, skill and a cadre that will understand whatever change that is taking place at each stage or moment. The danger arises when the change of reality impacts on the nature and character of the organization unconsciously (without the membership and organization being aware) because; what this means is that the organization is being impacted upon by reality without recognition or rather appreciation.

45. The organization and its cadreship must be consciously aware of the changing reality on the ground so as to consciously direct and manage both the negative and positive impact the changing reality brings to the nature and character of the organization because indeed failure to do so, will result in the dangerous tendency of the changing reality transforming the organization into something we do not know, instead of the organization transforming reality and making advances in improving the progressive nature of the organization and positioning the organization to lead society better.

46. This then among other things is what it means to be a “political preparatory school” of the ANC.

***End***

# ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SYSTEMS RENEWAL

## ANCYL ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

### Imperatives of Organizational Development

1. It is common cause that the African National Congress Youth League (herein referred to as ANCYL) was established in 1944 and that since then it has played an instrumental role in transforming and radicalizing the ANC into a revolutionary organization.
2. For successive generations, leaders and members of the ANCYL have distinguished their contribution in shaping not only the ANC but have been a critical player in South African, continental and world politics in line with the demands of each given period in history.
3. Therefore conscious of the fact that for ANCYL to remain relevant it has to be agile and forever adapt to material conditions, ***“Everything which exist, exist of necessity. But equally everything which exists is doomed to perish, to be transformed into something else. Thus what is “necessary” in one time or place becomes “unnecessary” in another. Everything begets its opposite” which is destined to overcome and negate it.*** Therefore organisational renewal is permanent process that a revolutionary organisation must always battle with in order to always enhance its capacity.
4. That understanding then instructs the ANCYL that while resolute in principle, it has to be flexible in tactic. Thus this document seeks to outline the key questions of the organizational development of the ANCYL, worse following the unprecedented dissolution of the ANCYL NEC and mandated NTT to rebuild ANCYL.

### Introduction

5. The ANCYL will convene its national congress this year (2014). Apart from electing a new leadership, congress will, most importantly adopt a programme of action around which the organisation will mobilise its membership and young people in general.
6. The 24<sup>th</sup> National Congress as inspired by Franz Fanon that ***“Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it,*** defined this generational mission as “Economic Freedom in our life time”. We concede that without a vibrant, militant and campaigning organisation, our mission is in a serious risk just being revolutionary sounding and rendering a feel good attitude but remained an empty and a

vulgarised slogan. It is against such a backdrop that this discussion document must model an organisation capable of rising to the occasion and pragmatically realising its mission.

7. This organizational task fits well within the context which the ANCYL finds itself, in that:
  - The ANCYL is celebrating 70 years of selfless struggle. We consider this as not just a narrow party-political celebration but a hallmark of ANCYL contribution, and as resilient revolutionary force, which is now renewing and rebuilding itself. The principal call is that the ANCYL must remain relevant and win the hearts and minds of young people of South Africa not only because of its rich history but for being a reliable vehicle that young people identify with and breed their hopes. We therefore believe that if we succeed in doing this we will usher the ANCL into a new path. We dare not fail young people; we dare not fail the future.
8. We need to renew and rebuild the ANCYL
  - Each generation of youth since 1944 has distinguished itself not only as a league of the ANC but a critical and influential body of opinion within ANC
  - Youth has always injected a sense of urgency and radicalism within the congress movement and this sense must be sustained. This can be traced throughout history from youth of the 1940s and the subsequent generations.
  - The democratic attainment of the 1994 political breakthrough and assuming of state power by the democratic forces led by the ANC, brought about new and complicated challenges for our movement. As such the ANCYL was not spared of now appealing and attracting to its ranks, members who were driven by resource self-accumulation interest and thus jostling for positions of influence to achieve individual interests at all costs. This continues to pose a serious challenge to the ANCYL, and as such we must redefine and reaffirm the meaning of being a youth league member of the ruling party, particularly in 21<sup>st</sup> century with a highly mobile youth that fully extract value from being youth league of the ruling party but also appropriately cushion itself from what has been referred to as 'the sins of incumbency'.
9. In general, the core of renewal must emphasize the task of members and more importantly branches which in a real essence must be strategic centres in pursuing the interests and aspirations of young people. In particular, the primary focus of the ANCYL must be to capacitate branches, wherein the centrality of our members' activism must translate to pragmatic programmes of the organization to uplift the lives of young people.
10. Moreover, the renewal and rebuilding of ANCYL must principally be about building the ANC's resilience, enhancing its transformative and governance capacity and its ability to



adapt to changing situations so that it can continue to serve and lead the people. Subsequently the Strategy and Tactics of the ANC correctly articulates that this task requires a united revolutionary movement rooted amongst the people, with a corps of cadres and organizational capabilities to learn, strategize, coordinate and implement the programme of transformation.

### **Character of ANCYL**

- 11. The ANCYL's primary role** is to champion interest of young people and rally young people behind the banner of the ANC.
- 12. The character of ANCYL** is that of a political and organisational preparatory school of the ANC, an organisation of young revolutionary democrats established in 1944 to rally youth into the national liberation struggle under the banner of the ANC and to champion their political and socio-economic interests of the youth of South Africa. ANCYL is a democratic, mass-based, non-racial, non-sexist and internationalist organization. The 1944 ANC Youth League manifesto, which essentially remains the basic guiding compass and ideological direction of the League, promotes three fundamental positions. These are: (i) loss of faith in white trusteeship, but now elects to determine his future by his own efforts (i.e. self-determination), (ii) Africans must struggle for development, progress and national liberation so as to occupy their rightful and honourable place among nations of the world (i.e. Africanism), and (iii) African Youth lays its service at the disposal of the national liberation movement, the ANC, to be its brains-trust, in belief and knowledge and conviction that the cause of Africa must and will triumph. These guiding principles ought to always guide current and future generations of youth league members. Most importantly Membership determines policy direction; elect its leadership and holds leadership accountable through active participation in branches.
- 13. Core values, principles and culture** of the ANCYL include unity, selfless service, collective leadership, democratic centralism, internal debates, humility, honesty, hard-work, constructive criticism and self-criticism, discipline and mutual respect.

### **Autonomy of ANCYL**

14. There has been a constant political and theoretical discussion on the notion of the 'autonomy' and 'independence' of the ANC Youth League as referred to in the constitutions of both the ANC and the Youth League. Perhaps as part of rebuilding it is appropriate to clarify misconceptions in this regard, by stating the constitutional basis of

the ANC and thus its relationship with the ANC. In this regard, Rule 7.4 of the ANC Constitution, which set out the objective of the Youth League as follows: *"... to unite and lead young men and women in confronting and dealing with the problems that face the youth, and in ensuring that the youth make a full and rich contribution to the work of the ANC and the life of the nation. The Youth League will function as an autonomous body within the overall structure of the ANC, of which it will be an integral part, with its own Constitution, rules and regulations, provided that these shall not be in conflict with the Constitution and policies of the ANC"*. Therefore our understanding of this constitutional proviso means that ANCYL primarily ought to remain an organ of the ANC and that the ANCYL remains autonomous in its operations but not independent from the ANC. In practice this means the ANCYL must continue to enjoy its organizational autonomy to elect its own leaders, set up its structures, and outline its own political program and to organize its activities.

15. From a vantage point of view, the ANC Youth League needs this autonomy as a strategic platform from which young people can be organized behind the political objectives of the ANC and as an organizational platform from which the Youth League can continually pursue youth interests within the ANC; infuse a militant, radical and energetic culture into ANC policies.
16. We proceed to make the argument that the ANC Youth League has an existential duty to sustain radical ideological notions on matters of political and economic discourse within the ANC and to sustain militant political activism in general.
17. In the context of this reasoning, notwithstanding the accepted fact of the ANC being the leading political force of the national democratic revolution, the ANC Youth League is understood to have a historically abiding duty of constantly infusing the ANC into a militant path in the course of pursuing the objectives of the NDR.
18. This necessarily includes popular agitation within and outside the ANC for the acceptance of policy positions of radical mold at all times, and commitment to militant efforts to achieving the objectives of the NDR. The ANC Youth League must a youthful organ, an institutional platform within which radical ideological notions can best be conceived.
19. Likewise, the ANC Youth League must systematically consolidate its own organizational driving force for the adoption of these radical policy positions in the ANC, as well as broadly propagating these positions within society.
20. We also consider that Youth League as an integral part of the ANC and thus owning the political right to engage in organizational dynamics of the ANC. This is with regards the fact of the ANC Youth League has a status in decision making platforms of the ANC, including matters such as leadership elections.

21. The related tendency in this regard is to use these policy positions as the basis of engaging even in leadership contests in the ANC. This derives from the reasoning that there is a direct relationship between political objectives being pursued at a given point in history and the subjective capacities of leaders holding the responsibility to lead the effort of achieving those objectives.
22. Thus the thrust of this reasoning holds that the ANC Youth League should unflinchingly engage in militant discourse that is designed to shake the foundations of conservative thinking both in the ANC and society. It therefore confesses that the knowledge that this will naturally make both the ANC and society uncomfortable.

#### **Lessons from dissolution of ANCYL NEC**

23. If the rebuilding of the ANCYL is to be successful, it is necessary to outline the painful yet necessary narrative that [although not conclusive] contributed to the dissolution of the ANCYL NEC and why had to even be engaged in rebuilding.
24. In the process of organisational rebuilding, it would thus be deceitful to hide our heads in the sand and behave as if nothing fundamentally wrong had previously taken place in order to evade the possibility of being labelled this or that.
25. The 53<sup>rd</sup> ANC National congress in Mangaung analyzed the relationship of the ANCYL towards the ANC as: ***“an antagonistic relationship with the mother-body (ANC), seemingly defining itself outside of the political framework of the ANC....and the emerging tendency in the ANCYL at different levels to recall and suspend members without due process”***. This characterization was equally observed by the National Task Team (NTT) when it visited Youth League structures to make an assessment of the state of the organisation.
26. An alien culture had engulfed the organization; with rampant gate keeping, membership manipulation and institutionalized factionalism that had deeply entrenched itself. Over time it had become a norm than an exception to circumvent and undermine organizational procedures and constitutional commands with impunity in a bid to muzzle perceived opponents.

## Lessons from Election's Campaign

27. It was once again evident that the ANC can only truly fulfill its primary mission if it is a united, cohesive and disciplined force for change. Unity, cohesion and discipline are critical success factors. The campaign teaches us an important lesson that when the ANC is united, no enemy can defeat it.
28. This campaign saw the most innovative and creative forms of organizing and campaigning to reach out to different sections of the population – professionals, township and village rallies, traditional leaders and healers, churches and mosques. The use of technology, aggressive branding like the car branding, bikers, the helicopter and billboards. And door-to-door work remained the principal pillar of our campaign strategy.
29. The inability of ANCYL to mobilize resources remains one of our serious handicapping factor both as it relates to campaigns and subsequent for organization rebuilding.
30. The leadership's resolve on building genuine unity prevented a temptation to purge those whom one disagreed in the run-up to the National Congress and other congresses in regions and provinces.
31. The confidence that ordinary people place in the ANC arises from our proven track record and ongoing commitment to improve the quality of their lives.
32. Youth with specific reference to youth between 18 – 19 did not voted in large numbers in the last elections worse many did not even register, we must ponder seriously as to what does that mean on immediate future of ANCYL and subsequent whether that means this youth may not be identifying with ANC. While this poses a threat but it equally provides opportunity for ANCYL going forward to design itself as to attract this youth within its ranks
33. It is clear that our branches and other structures, systems and processes need a major replenishment if we are to keep pace with the times and remain a movement that is deeply rooted among the masses of our people (i.e. our membership data collection and application leave much to be desired). For example street sheets which were collected must give ANC very much clarity as to which house there are supporters or members of ANCYL, are they active, what are their views about organization, how can they

contribute to life of the ANC) etc., including reaching out to the youth and emerging Black middle strata.

34. Renewal should point to the weaknesses in our grassroots structures that inhibit the movement's capacity to deepen the roots and influence of the ANC among its core constituency of the working class, the poor and new emerging strata such as youth and the black middle strata and professionals.
35. We must continue to rely on tried and tested methods of interaction with the overwhelming majority of our mass base.
36. Most protests or community mobilization campaigns, issue based are led by YOUNG people but no influence of the ANCYL structures. Recently held elections showed that the democratic state is not seen as an 'enemy', BUT
37. Our structures have not mastered the art of combining state power and mass power to push the frontiers of fundamental change – oppositional, not transformative.
38. Popular and democratic character of transformation continued to be undermined (e.g. weaknesses of participatory democratic forums).

## **Challenges and context**

### **The International Environment**

39. No country in the world operates as an island. The fate and destiny of whole nations depends on what they themselves do as it rests on what happens in the world as a whole. An analysis of domestic politics is incomplete without an analysis of global politics as a whole.
40. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the world order that grew out of it hegemonised right wing forces across the globe on the one hand and weakened left forces on the other. In many instances, the left has retreated more than weaken. While this does not mean, and must not be interpreted to mean that the era of revolution is over, it nonetheless means that the global political economy setting within which we have sought to transform our society over the last 20 years would have slowed not only the ANC in terms of its transformative programme but all global left forces as a whole.
41. There has been little intellectual output or reception of it's (the left) ideas in the public domain. In contrast, right-wing ideas have been dominant and have tended to receive widespread dissemination and therefore inform much of what passes as public discourse and public policy.

42. To understand this phenomenon, we must return to Karl Marx when he said, in *The German Ideology*: **“The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas.”**
43. Francis Fukuyama’s essay: “The End of History?” published in the right-wing American journal, *The National Interest*, was one of the first right-wing intellectual shapers of the post 1989 world. He argued, among other things: **“What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.”**
44. The international right-wing establishment propagated the apolitical notation that the world had entered a permanently happy juncture free of contradictions between rich and poor within and between nations, developing and developed countries, workers and owners of the means of production – a so-called “New World Order” which a significant section of the academic, media and other strata of the middle classes came to internalise.
45. Racial, class, gender and other forms of human-made social inequality will never permit **“the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of [one ideological perspective] as the final form of human government.”** But Fukuyama’s thesis helped to shape much of the discourse of the early 1990s upon which various international and domestic policies of many countries and indeed much of the world’s public discourse came to be based.
46. Though they cannot in fairness be accused of naivety, some in the left like the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev, might have been over optimistic about the capacity for sincerity among their ideological opponents. Gorbachev and other comrades also came to speak of a “New World Order,” though they had a different vision than the right-wing establishment. Addressing the UN General Assembly on December 9, 1988, Gorbachev argued that **“force and the threat of force can no longer be, and should not be instruments of foreign policy.”** Preceding this correct remark, one in which the Western world has never abided, Gorbachev had

also correctly noted: **“Behind differences in social structure, in the way of life, and in the preference for certain values, stand interests.”**

47. Gorbachev also noted that **“the striving to give up confrontation in favour of dialogue and cooperation has made itself strongly felt, but it has by no means secured its position forever in the practice of international relations. ... The movement towards a nuclear-free and nonviolent world is capable of fundamentally transforming the political and spiritual face of the planet, but only the very first steps have been taken. Moreover, in certain influential circles, they have been greeted with mistrust, and they are meeting resistance.”**
48. Earlier in February 1979, the then President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, had also spoken of a new world order, the **“New International Economic Order,”** of equality within and between nations. He said: **“The world order still works against the interests of the poor.”**
49. Of importance for the world order then and now, Nyerere also said: **“I do not believe that is the kind of choice we face. We do not have to choose between Dialogue and Confrontation with the rich: there is no reason why we should be apologetic about negotiating, or about refusing to go on with a particular discussion and resorting to direct action. Ours is a kind of Trade Union of the Poor. Sometimes—perhaps most of the time—we will negotiate about different aspects of the demand for a New International Economic Order and settle for the best compromise we can reach at that time. Sometimes, however, we may be forced to call a strike in order to show that certain things are no longer acceptable!”**
50. A few years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1994, the Western world proved that it had not abandoned its instinct for force when it gave the then Yugoslavian President Slobodan Milosevic the green light to maintain the country cohesion under Serbian domination over the Albanians.
51. When the country broke up, Germany recognised Croatia, which had been a puppet state under the Nazi occupation in the Second World War. Ethnic tensions rose exponentially and led, among other things, to a declaration of independence by the Serbian minority in the Krajina region of Croatia. France and Britain abandoned their pro-Serb tilt and joined the Clinton administration’s support of an alliance between Bosnian Croats and Muslims against the Serbs. This was despite the fact that Croatian President Franjo Tudjman was every bit the authoritarian nationalist that Milosevic was.
52. That old instrument of imperialist aggression, NATO, was unleashed into a wave of bombardment of Bosnia. In 1998, the US accused Milosevic of plotting genocide against Albanians, proposed a **“compromise”** which would have allowed NATO troops unrestricted movement across Yugoslavia. Milosevic had offered a new autonomy deal

for Kosovo; Albright had responded by demanding that Yugoslavia accept a virtual invasion. The rest, as they say is history.

53. Kosovo was followed by other imperialist acts of aggression elsewhere in the world, notably Iraq, Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, Syria and now recently Ukraine. The US maintains its illegal and illegitimate economic blockade against Cuba and is not unwilling, at best to destabilise democratic governments like Venezuela and at worst to invade them under the guise of exporting democracy. The Western world sheds crocodile tears as Apartheid Israeli Defence Forces indiscriminately massacre Palestinian women and children. (We discuss Côte d'Ivoire and Libya separately below.)

54. Though the world is not what it was in 1979, **“The world order still works against the interests of the poor”** many ways, notably:

- Institutions of global governance remain unrepresentative of the vast majority of the world’s people in particular Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America; and,
- The global economic order is still as unfair as it ever was, with increasing levels of unemployment and poverty especially in the developing world.

55. In the post-1989 world, imperialism has fine-tuned the language and stratagems of deceit. Seemingly innocuous concepts such as the “Responsibility to Protect,” are employed to impose illegitimate and unaccountable regimes which lord over their populations in furtherance of Western political and economic interests. Democracy is often discussed as the right of the people to vote every four or five years with no socio-economic content.

56. Developing countries are lectured on, cajoled and even bullied to adopt economic and political blue prints evolved from the developed West without due consideration to their own specific history and state of development. The socio-economic fallouts of these prescriptions are always invariably the fault of the developing countries and not the prescribers.

57. The cold war has ended to the extent that the Soviet Union no longer exists today. But the Western world led by the US has not abandoned its desire to fashion the world according to its normative outlook and interests and, when necessary, to use brute force to achieve whatever outcomes it seeks. Madeline Albright put this succinctly as US Ambassador to the UN in 1998: “The US will act multilaterally when we can and unilaterally when we must.”

58. Congress must discuss the international situation and take firm resolutions on the current global world order and take appropriate resolutions intended to mobilise the ANCYL’s membership, young people in South Africa and beyond to change the global order in favour of the Wretched of the Earth. We must heed Marx counsel when he



wrote: “We develop new principles for the world out of the world’s own principles. We do not say to the world: Cease your struggles; they are foolish; we will give you the true slogan of struggle. We merely show the world what it is really fighting for, and consciousness is something that it has to acquire, even if it does not want to.” (Letter from the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher to Ruge, 1843),

59. In particular, Congress must deliberate on the unfair constitution of international governance bodies like the United Nations, international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the situation in Iraq, Syria, the bullying of Iran by, in particular, the US, the situation in Palestine and the Middle East as a whole, Ukraine, the continuing economic embargo against Cuba and the destabilisation of Venezuela.

## THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

60. The African continent is today at peace in contrast to the situation in the late 1980s and early 1990s. However, on-going conflict in countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Two Sudan’s, Somalia, the Central African Republic, Libya, Mali and levels of insecurity in Nigeria and elsewhere are worrisome.
61. Peace is a prerequisite for the continent to achieve the development it requires to overcome under-development and poverty. But peace will not be achieved by declaration. For peace to hold, the continent needs to address the structural causes of conflict first and foremost. In many instances, these are to be found in the social (dis)organisation of African societies during the colonial era which post independent Africa failed to address.
62. These factors include the management of national (ethnic), religious and other diversities, centre-periphery political and economic relations and governance systems that respond to local needs and imperatives as well as the unequal global power relations within which Africa and the rest of the developing world operate. As Nyerere put it when he addressed the existing world order: **“Newly de-colonised nations, and the older countries of Latin America, had all inherited the same idea from the dominant Euro-American culture: work hard and you will become prosperous. Gradually we all discovered that hard work and prosperity were not cause and effect; something external to ourselves always seemed to break the reputed connection! The so-called neutrality of the world market place turned out to be a neutrality between the exploiter and the exploited, between a bird of prey and its victim If in our effort to find resources for survival— let alone development—we carried out the textbook procedures for raising capital, we always seemed to end up under the virtual control of the transnational corporations or subject to IMF deflationary**

**policies—or both. We did not achieve progress; we simply moved from the frying pan into the deep-freezer! Even if we tried to do nothing except sell our traditional exports and buy our traditional imports, we found that we could buy less and less with more and more of our hard work.”**

63. Success in addressing all these factors will require a progressive political outlook about all matters African, led by progressive Africans across the board – in the political, academic, cultural, business, religious, trade union, women, youth and other spheres. These progressives must promote appreciation of the necessity of all our countries to undergo genuine processes of democratisation in the interest of the masses of the people as one of the basis for political and socio-economic development.
64. The failure of national democratic processes/revolutions was graphically illustrated in the uprisings that took place in Tunisia and Egypt and resulted in the overthrow of the Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak regimes. Both countries failed the democratic test over decades. In the case of Tunisia, although the country achieved relatively high levels of human development post-independence, the Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD) which took power at independence from France in 1956 was a repressive and largely reactionary regime in much the same way as Egypt after the death of Abdel Nasser with the notable exception that Egypt after Nasser also gradually became a US client state.
65. Congress must discuss the State of the African continent and take resolutions on what the ANCYL will do to contribute to the formation and strengthening of a progressive African movement for the renewal of Africa.
66. For our part as the ANC, this means that more than ever before, South Africa requires an ANC that is both committed and has the capacity to lead the country on a progressive trajectory in all areas of social life. This can only be achievable if the ANC and the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) as a whole consists of highly politically cultivated members and activists.
67. The achievement of peace and security on the African continent also requires the strengthening of intergovernmental organisations like the SADC and the African Union. Currently, a large proportion of the AU’s budget comes from donors from outside the African continent. The AU is currently investigating alternative sources of funding other than existing donors. Congress must discuss the strengthening of African intergovernmental organisations, including African efforts required to develop sustainable sources for their funding.
68. The adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1973 resulted in a NATO-led regime change offensive in Libya. It is now clear that Libya is a failed state much worse than Somalia and is likely to be so for a long time to come. Yet, in keeping with the double standards (if standards there are at all) of the Western political, academic and media

establishment, little is said today about the criminality of Resolution 1973 and those that aggressively implemented it.

69. The consequences of NATO's conquest of Libya have affected most of the Sahel region in terms of the illegal distribution of small arms, a severe strain on already stretched law enforcement resources in a region and stoking up religious extremist groups. All the available evidence points to the fact that the Libyan situation would have been peacefully resolved had the UN not chosen to ignore the African Road Map as proposed by the AU.
70. The abuse of the UN had also been witnessed earlier in April 2011 when UN troops accompanied by French troops in Côte d'Ivoire assisted Alassane Ouattara's rebel army to shell then President Laurent Gbagbo's official residence and installed the former as President despite a disputed Presidential election in December 2010. As usual, the unusual step of UN forces who are by law supposed to stand equidistant to opposing forces intervening in favour of one side of the conflict was presented in the mainstream media as a victory for democracy. But Ouattara's installation was nothing more than a French colonial victory over a former colony which it continues to exploit economically with the aid of its army.
71. Congress must discuss the events that took place in Libya and Côte d'Ivoire and take firm resolutions on the relationship between Africa and the rest of the world including the UN.
72. The US government is forging ahead with the establishment of military bases on the African continent under the auspices of the United States Africa Command (Africom). Currently headquartered at Kelly Barracks in Stuttgart, Germany, the US has been pressurising African governments to establish a presence on African soil since 2007. US marines that participated in the regime change plot in Libya were from the Africom Command.
73. As part of its propaganda programme to sway African governmental and public opinion in its favour, Africom is partnering with African governments on Security Cooperation programmes which, according to its website, focus on "building operational and institutional capacity and developing human capital, and provide a framework within which the command engages with regional partners in cooperative military activities and development," Disaster Preparedness Programmes and a number of health programmes. They also regularly invite journalists from African countries for interactions in Stuttgart as part of a propaganda programme to sway public opinion to its favour. According to Chief of Media Operations in the Office of Public Affairs, Ben Benson: **"We have found, many months later, that journalists who participated write intelligently about our security cooperation. We have also seen them counter false**

**rumours about AFRICOM. We believe the media visit program is a win-win for all involved,”** said Benson.

74. Beneath the sweeteners lies a poisoned chalice. Africom is part of US infrastructure for global economic and military dominance. The US is engaged in similar projects in the Asian pacific where it is encircling China with a chain of air bases and military ports as a response to China’s growing economic and military strength. Africom is presented as a US army division intended to help Africans. The reality is that it is a US Marine unit to beat the Africans into line when they take decisions which the US considers to be at variance with its national interest. Congress must express its strong opposition to US and any other foreign military presence on African soil. Instead of a military presence, Africa requires a genuine partnership with the developed world to address challenges of under-development and poverty. That is a long lasting solution.
75. In addition to the Africom project, the US also has a number of Drone and Surveillance Flight Bases on the African continent.
76. These challenges underscore the imperative for African Unity both on the political and economic front. The countries that are being enticed into hosting Africom and Drone and Surveillance Flight Bases are undoubtedly offered aid packages which help to alleviate hunger pangs of the moment. They will understandably opt to address immediate problems not because they are oblivious to the long term negative political implications for themselves and the rest of the continent.
77. It is also evident that for its political and economic survival, the continent must further strengthen its relations with other regions of the world beyond the Western world. The growth of the Chinese and Indian economies present Africa with immense opportunities to diversify its economic relations which and thus lessen its dependence on the Western world, especially Europe.
78. As Africans, we must bear in mind that this opening re-opens old instincts for the scramble for Africa with immense political implications we must understand and develop the capacity to manage.
79. In the last few years, Africa has been engaged in a discussion, albeit lacking the requisite co-ordination, about the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Of concern has been the Court’s ever-ready exuberance to prosecute African cases at the exclusion of war crimes committed by the powerful in places like in Iraq and Palestine. This has led many to believe that the ICC exists to prosecute the weak and mainly the Africans.
80. At the heart of the debate on the ICC is the principle of self-determination, i.e. Africa’s right to define the nature of its challenges and to elaborate solutions based on its own understanding of the nature of the challenge. In so far as the ICC is concerned, the

continent has been pitted against justice fundamentalists who believe that courts (and the ICC alone) are the final arbiters for political conflicts outside of politics.

81. The same justice fundamentalists are the first to hail the South African transition a success. Yet, our transition did not, so to speak, ignore the justice factor, but located it within a broad political framework, which privileged the future more than the past. We cannot rule out the fact that because those who would have been dragged into the courts were white in the South African context, justice fundamentalists find it instinctively permissible to ring-fence the South African experience and to prescribe an exclusively punitive model for the rest of the continent were none of the belligerents is white.
82. Congress must discuss the role of the ICC in Africa and the world and pronounce itself broadly and specifically with regard to its prosecutorial pattern, the strengthening of African political and legal institutions in the context of the need to resolve African conflicts and to find long lasting solutions.
83. The colonial and apartheid experience served to isolate Africans from one another. South Africa is no exception and probably one of the most severely affected. One consequence of this phenomenon is that some in our countries harbour negative attitudes about fellow Africans from across our borders. This has resulted in periodic sporadic outbreaks of violence against fellow Africans. The ANCYL is duty bound to elaborate a programme to address this phenomenon.

## **SOUTH AFRICA, THE ANC AND THE ANCYL**

84. The demise of formal apartheid represented an important victory for the people of South Africa, the African continent, the progressive world and humanity as a whole. It provided the people of South Africa and the ANC with the possibility to intervene to re-write the structure of our society in terms of its politics, economy, culture and other aspects that define the nature and character of any society.
85. The coordinates of our intervention were marked in important policy documents of the ANC before and during the early 1990s included but not limited 'The Freedom Charter,' 'Ready to Govern' and the 'Reconstruction and Development Programme.'
86. Over the last 20 years, the country has recorded much progress in the political and socio-economic arena. Undoubtedly, much still needs to be done to overcome the legacy of colonialism and apartheid and, in doing so, fully re-write the structure of our society in favour of the historically oppressed. To this extent, South Africa remains an unfinished story.

87. The logic of racial capitalist exploitation upon which South Africa was constructed since 1652 is local and global footprints in its structure and manifestation. As an institutionalised ideology and social practice, racism began during the Atlantic Slave Trade and lives long to date. Long before and since its inception, the ANC's fight against racism was, is, will and must consciously remain part of the global struggle against racism;
88. The social culture, sub-cultures and moral value system of colonialism and apartheid remain deeply rooted in our society. They are social constructs which will take deliberate social-re-engineering to overcome so as to promote the culture and social value system of a democratic people centred society we seek to create;
89. Black people (so-called coloureds, people of Indian descent and indigenous Africans) faced the brunt of colonial and apartheid exploitation in racial, class and gender terms. Racism was and remains a class ideology of capitalism; and though economic and political, colonialism, apartheid and the social relations arising therefrom, assumed a racial dynamic. But as CLR James put it, while the race question is subsidiary to the class question in politics, to think of capitalist imperialism in terms of race is as unhelpful as **“to neglect the racial factor as merely incidental ... an error only less grave than to make it fundamental;”** and,
90. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the world order that grew out of that historic event hegemonies right wing forces across the globe on the one hand and weakened left forces on the other. While this does not mean, and must not be interpreted to mean that the era of revolution is over, it nonetheless means that the global political economy setting within which we have sought to transform our society over the last 20 years would have slowed not only the ANC in terms of its transformative programme but all global left forces as a whole.
91. The foregoing discussion points to one conclusion, i.e.: More than ever before, South Africa requires an ANC that is both committed and has the capacity to lead the country on a progressive trajectory in all areas of social life. This can only be achievable if the ANC and the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) as a whole consists of highly politically cultivated members and activists.
92. In carrying forward our tasks, we must bear in mind that during the last 20 years, we have committed mistakes which have slowed progress in achieving the objectives to which we set ourselves. We must have the courage to acknowledge these mistakes because any liberation movement that does not accept its mistakes inevitably invests in its own eventual demise. Self-criticism inspires the courage to accept one's mistakes and has been an important feature and characteristic of revolutionary liberation movements to which the ANC belongs.

93. As Mao Tse Tung wrote in 'On Coalition Government:' **"Conscientious practice of self-criticism is ... another hallmark distinguishing our Party from all other political parties. As we say, dust will accumulate if a room is not cleaned regularly, our faces will get dirty if they are not washed. Our comrades' minds and our Party's work may also collect dust, and also need sweeping and washing. The proverb: "Running water is never stale and a door hinge is never worm-eaten" means that constant motion prevents the inroads of germs and other organisms. To check up regularly on our work and in the process develop a democratic style of work, to fear neither criticism nor self-criticism, and to apply such good popular Chinese maxims as: "Say all you know and say it without reserve," "Blame not the speaker but be warned by his words" and "Correct mistakes if you have committed them and guard against them if you have not" – this is the only effective way to prevent all kinds of political dust and germs from contaminating the minds of our comrades and the body of our Party."** (On Coalition Government, Selected Works, Vol III, pp 316-17).
94. In this connection, it is also worth reminding ourselves of political truisms that are sometimes glossed over amongst our ranks and in public discourse more generally. These are that
95. The ANC is attempting to change a society whose architecture and structure commenced 362 years ago in 1652. This means that inexcusable as some of our mistakes might be, it would have been impossible to overcome the legacy of colonialism and apartheid in short 20 years of the democratic dispensation;
96. Since its formation in 1944, the ANCYL has been part of our country's forces for progressive change. Together with the entirety of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) as led by the African National Congress (ANC), our efforts culminated in the democratic break-through in 1994.
97. As part of the MDM and a League of the ANC, the state of the ANCYL is a reflection both of the state of the ANC and the MDM as a whole. To varying degrees, the problems and challenges of the ANCYL pervade all MDM formations and structures of the movement. While this must not become a source of comfort for us, and while we must do everything in our power to address our challenges, we should, at the same time also attend to the challenges that face the movement and the MDM as a whole
98. 1994 ushered in new conditions of freedom and democracy, this change of terrain imposed new strategic and organizational imperatives on the Youth League of the ruling party.
99. State power has brought stresses and strains on the values, culture, character and practices of the ANC and effectively all its league

100. Upon resumption of power, even the most vibrant and progressive political party begins to experience negative tendencies such as bureaucratization of the development of social distance; arrogance of power and its abuse; moral and ideological degeneration among rank-and-file marked by a rise in careerism and corruption.
101. A vibrant organizational culture and inner-party ideological discourse is replaced by incessant battles for control of the state and resources that goes with it.
102. The ANC and its leagues got intensely divided as cadres fight each other over access to state power and resources associated.
103. In the process new ways of lobbying developed wherein money, the media and state institutions would be employed to seek to influence the outcome of leadership elections and other decision-making processes within the movement
104. Since 1944 YL have been influential body of opinion within ANC, being a league of ruling party is a major strength as it allows resolve of the ANCYL to find expression as government program
105. Resilience on all years of being underground, majority of young people in particular African and marginalized identify with ANCYL as their beacon of hope and political home. ANCYL has presence and visibility almost in every part of the country thus its organizational basis for being campaigning organization that is rooted in hearts and souls of young South Africans
106. Its sense of radicalism has always brought about sense of urgency within ANC policy discourse and programs of government, organizational influence within society as trend setter, provides basis for ANCYL to sustain progressive discourse within public mainstream
107. Technology provides strength and threats to organization influence which ANCYL has to be mindful on how it exploit these developments and mitigate its threats
108. Progress and challenges since 1994
- Substantial progress, but
  - economy still reside in the main in the hands of monopoly capital which results in triple challenges
  - Poverty, unemployment and inequality being principal challenges
109. For ANCYL to be capable of being champion of young people it requires that it overcome:
- Erosion of the political-ideological-organizational character and capacity of the movement; and



- Affirms the centrality of organization and overcoming the rampant factionalism and almost private ownership of certain structures by those with resources.
110. We assess the impact neo-liberalism not only on progressive politics or but also on organization-building and movement-building – shift to palace politics.
111. Non antagonism contradiction of political relationship with ANC require vibrant ANCYL in levels in appreciating the autonomy of the league and position ANCYL not to be only power broker within ANC but being campaigning and active organization

### **Organizational challenges**

112. If we are to be true to organizational renewal we must emphatically clarify:
- a. Any notion that ‘the Mangaung or Gallagher Congress is the beginning and source of all our current organisational weaknesses must be dismissed as it unscientific and lazy to study attend to essence but appearance and that appearance could have not been event but exposed what organisation has been battling with.
  - b. We must also dismiss the subjective inclination to personalize organisational challenges and attribute them to specific individuals who hold leadership positions.
  - c. New organisational challenges can only be overcome through an organisational and mass approach

### **Alien tendencies**

113. Tendencies related to lobbying in our organization:
- With ANCYL being youth organ of governing party, has implications of attracting all sorts of opportunist within its ranks who are willing to do everything and transgress every organization process as long as they ascend to the throne
  - Use and or influence of money to buy membership, lobbying for internal organizational positions and patronizing delegates is threatening whole organization to be up for sale
  - Use of state power is proving to becoming worse than better, which delegates promised jobs, promotion, tenders, loss of employment etc if they do not support this or that candidate or take this or that resolutions.
  - Rampant factionalism is threatening centrality of the organization, at times factions operate as recognize pockets within organization, which at times are more resourced than organization and their strict gangsterism discipline means

members owe allegiance to factions and take organizational discipline for granted, of late factions have even tag line names.

- Manipulation of organization process including tendency of signature campaigns and deny membership to those who do not toe the dominant factional line.
- Hampered ability to conduct ANCYL meetings and affairs in an orderly and peaceful manner, with violence being used to undermine and or circumvent democratic processes.
- Limited activism of any from ANCYL structures beyond congresses and branches only activated for purposes of delegates to congress and no membership activism beyond that.
- Slate politics, continue to rob organisation of best talent within its tanks because of winner takes all or clean slate phenomena, further fuelling and rewarding factional loyalty
- Association with ANCYL often means upward social mobility and or deployment which invites all sorts of tendencies and subsequently undermine our character and values
- Structural with embedded racial content hunger, unemployment and youth not in school, work or any form of training
- Social distance between ANCYL and youth as shown by young people being central in mass protest without guidance or involvement of ANCYL structures, worse as we have seen young people in numbers associating with opposition parties than ANC
- Very limited activism of professional youth within ANCYL and dominance of ANCYL activists which stand to subjectively benefit from ANC being in power is posing a challenge of inward looking organization in permanent state of jostling for positions, which means we have to consider re-establishment of youth forums designed per sector as to respond and appeal to all strata's of ANCYL
- We must consider developing a structured role of ANCYL former leaders in preserving the integrity, values and discipline within ANCYL

114. Further, inward focus being the political life of the organization (e.g. palace politics, factionalism etc.) As a result we focus away from youth concerns and programmatic tasks to address these concerns, leading to indiscipline, factionalism etc.

115. At center of challenge confronting ANCYL thereof is the fact that our organisational systems and general organisational machinery are currently designed in a manner that allows for all the backward practices such as buying membership, gate keeping, upward social mobility pruners etc.

## Priority of renewal

116. Some of the priorities for renewal
- 117.1 Prioritize the strengthening and organizing of vibrant, active and campaigning branches, without branches bringing life to organization with active membership, then we have structures but no organization in real sense.
- 117.2 To reconnect the ANCYL with its mass-base, young people from all walks of life in have to inspired to be part of the ANCYL and identify this organization as their political home
- 117.3 Our branches must reflect this new image and youthfulness we seek to engender in the League. They must be League. They must be in the forefront of the issues of young people in communities, taking up and engage local government and business around social and economic development campaigns, working with learners at schools, and towards building a vibrant and diverse youth sector.
- 117.4 The League must consciously seek to involve in its programmes, and where possible recruit as members and into its leadership structures, young intellectuals, cultural and media workers, artists, sports people, professionals and business people. It must galvanize these sectors to become more vocal in shaping, not only youth opinion, but also public opinion in our society. It must facilitate and provide forums for them to engage and interact with the leadership of the movement and the country on a regular basis.
- 117.5 Safeguard the ANC's and ANCYL core values; organization cannot co – exist with alien tendencies such as ill-discipline factionalism, use of money, patronage. Its either organization triumph or it's overwhelmed by tendencies and therefore going forward cannot even be recognized. ANCYL must jealousy safeguard values such unity, selfless service, collective leadership, democratic centralism, internal debates, humility, honesty, hard-work, constructive criticism and self-criticism, discipline and mutual respect
- 117.6 Make political education and community work compulsory with contribution of each member measured and reported in meetings of ANCYL
- 117.7 ANCYL has to perpetual organizing and re-organize and on each day always be in the state of becoming much better than yesterday, as to remain agile, flexible and adaptive. That means organizational structures and the machinery – from HQ to branches to focus on the pressing concerns of communities
- 117.8 With information and knowledge age, ANCYL has to interpret the aspiration of young people into tangible intervention, campaign's, programs, policy proposals, initiating bills which means ANCYL in all its structures with strong co – ordination form National Office must strengthen its campaign, research and policy capacity
- 117.9 Elements of gate – keeping and manipulation of processes more often than not stifle internal democracy and vibrancy in the organization therefore will of members is undermined leading to all sorts of credibility crisis and chaos, in this regard organization

must overhaul its membership system and consider even joining on line and further benefits that accrue from membership of the ANCYL, while in same vein improving process on recruitment, organizing meetings, elections processes

117.10 ANCYL in its constant state of becoming has to appreciate that massive connection infrastructure and technology have made communication to be faster in almost all aspects of life, meaning ANCYL has to be more aggressive in exploiting these platforms and enhance unmediated interaction with membership but also a strong platform for political education, campaigning, it is clear that social media and other platforms are going to be critical going forward. The League must be bold and make use of the advances in information and technology, and mobilise for the expansion of these services for all young people.

117.11 Whether how brilliant ANCYL can develop ideas as long as they are not backed by organization that has capacity to translate them into action, those ideas will soon become distant memory and be forgotten. ANCYL has to attend to hard question of how it becomes financial sustainable as to carry forward its programs, recent past statement of facing real possibility of being liquidated by court of law remain harsh reminder in that ANCYL cannot rely on promises of donations as they also have potential of mortgaging organization to certain resourced groupings and or factions, whom can be mischievous and want to determine political agenda.

### **Attracting a wide range of youth forces**

118. As part of class formation, the changing nature demographic profile of the country as a majority youthful population, as well as new cultures penetrating the social space, there is a need to identify opportunities of renewal in terms of membership profile of the organisation.

119. Already we have re-established the organisation in universities and thereby adding to the diversity of our membership and support base. The experience of existing in university campuses has brought a mixed bag of opportunity and negative developments, all at once. Whereas it meant growth for the organisation, it also had a fair share of changing the nature of the Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA).

120. However, more critical is that in society, in the community out there, we should be able to attract atypical members who are in various fields of life and possess different skills and talents. In some ways, this has begun to happen naturally. However, there is an opportunity to increase the trend. One of the ways is to design our gatherings and congresses in manner that showcases talents and various life endeavours

of the youth and our members. Further consider establishing youth forums per sectors of youth activism like culture, entrepreneurs, professionals etc.

121. Therefore, we should consider using the NGC as a complete Festival experience, learning from organisations such as the World Federation of Democratic Youth's (WFDY) long standing tradition of Festivals, combining politics and lived experiences of the youth. The point to emphasise is that, there are politics and economics in every sphere of life. By using our platforms to showcase and engage youth culture and their innovations, we can enrich and grow the organisation whilst engaging the youth on the political content of their ideas and initiatives.
122. The outcome is that, if anybody wants the best in any field of life, the Youth League should have the capacity to unleash and showcase.
123. If ANCYL has to respond adequately and win confidence of young people not through imposition or only being young wing of ruling party has to appreciate the interest of various categories of young people in South Africa. First and foremost youth is not class but a social strata in transit therefore youth it's not homogenous entity in its interest but may vary from school going age, working youth, unemployed etc.
124. For purpose of organisational renewal we will categorise youth as per age cohorts as we to respond to each category accordingly, those in the 14 – 18 are largely found in secondary schools and have specific challenges facing them. Apart from the need for better schooling conditions and improved quality education this sector continues to be faced by challenges of teenage pregnancies, Hiv/aids, racial tensions and recently violence in schools.
125. The age group 14 - 18 finds itself with the huge responsibility of making crucial decisions which are likely to shape their entire future. This involves but not limited to the career decisions that they must take, especially as they enter the senior stages of their secondary schooling. This is largely determined by the selection of subjects, which in most cases youth from working class backgrounds finds it difficult to make informed choices. This means the Youth League must reposition itself to be able to take on the task of ensuring that the youth in mention is well equipped when taking life-long defining decisions such as the above.
126. Moreover, while this age group is located within an era of opportunities which were previously denied to the majority of our country before, it is also met with the conservative elements in our society which are opposed to transformation. This is witnessed in the growing racist thinking that seeks to suggest that when the less

privileged youth in secondary schooling achieve impressive results in their matric, it is because of political interference and manipulation of results by the ruling party. This then results in universities making attempts to change their admission policies so as to ensure that access to less privileged youth is limited to a few.

127. The ANCYL also finds itself with the challenge of claiming hegemony within the more affluent youth population. These are normally from privileged backgrounds, or have as a result of government interventions, escaped the realities of poverty, inequality or unemployment. This is where the ideas of the ruling class thrive, and the liberal offensive is most welcome. This is why you will find the youth in this group blaming the ANC government for all the challenges that exist in our society, including those that we have inherited from the previous illegitimate system of apartheid.
128. The YL must ensure that it fosters programs to instil consciousness in this terrain, as it is the one which the democratic alliance and other conservative and ultra-elements use as a gateway to our people. This means the YL will have to adapt in order for this population to be able to relate with the league. This however does not mean we must lose our biasness to the working class or our revolutionary character.
129. The 18 – 27 is found in the main between tertiary institutions, informal sector and limited formal sector employment. Those who graduate still faced by limited opportunities in terms of broad economic role and or quality decent job opportunities. By large this is group that which if not either still in training, school or just started work, its remains unemployed and battles conditions of poverty in our communities. Those who just started work are exploited and transition from dependant from parents to young adult trouble this youth cohort.
130. The 27 – 35 is confronted by challenges of unemployment, lack of relevant skills, housing, limited opportunities in terms of economic role either as workers or youth entrepreneurs. This category is also affected by challenges of alcohol/drug abuse, crime and hiv/aids. Despite the above, the advent of democracy and the gains the struggle has achieved, has presented young people with both opportunities and challenges.
131. It must further noted that whilst the growing youth section of middle strata, the research show that this majority still remains confronted by challenges of high indebted, poverty, access to education, lack of required skills (economy), unemployment etc. it is in pursuance of our work that we must clearly understand each and every category, their plight including how we locate their role in building a new society and defending the revolution.
132. At centre of our organisational response to these youth cohorts, must to respond to their specific realities and our structures have critical role to mobilize and

champion these issues as despite this challenges the YL still enjoys the popular support amongst the youth in our society and this is regardless of their social status and age.

## Cadre Development

133. The ANCYL has a responsibility of producing young cadres who will be able to stand the constant attacks directed at our revolutionary movement, its leagues and its alliance formations. These are cadres who will be able to take responsibility for the national democratic revolution, volunteering themselves to the anti-imperialist task with the primary aim of fighting the class problem and combatting revisionism within our own ranks.
134. These young cadre must be able to resist the sins of incumbency bourgeois flattery, whose aim will be to try isolating him or her from the broader progressive collective and instilling the personally cult within him or her. This the bourgeois class does by singing praises to the individual, making the young cadre a commodity whose image can be sold as that which all members must aspire to be.
135. This will be witnessed when one of our well trained cadres will think that the organisation cannot survive unless it is led by them or people of their choice. We must invest on a young cadre who will be able to resist the temptation as Chairman Mao put it: **"To let things slide for the sake of peace and friendship when a person has clearly gone wrong, and refrain from principled argument because he is an old acquaintance, a fellow townsman, a schoolmate, a close friend, a loved one, an old colleague or old subordinate. Or to touch on the matter lightly instead of going into it thoroughly, so as to keep on good terms."** He further adds on that if such is not resisted, both the organisation and the individual are harmed.
136. The organisation, should introduce improve the understanding of members not only about politics or the political economy, but also public policy both in domestic and foreign policy front. As a result, new partnerships with progressive think tanks across the country and elsewhere in the world must be explored, with the view to enrich the experience of the organisation and its members. Our members wherever they are, must understand and articulate and promote public policies of the ANC-led government. In any case, most of the policies are progressive.
137. The importance of discipline, self-discipline and self-cultivation is an important attribute of a cadre
138. Going Forward
- six-year programme of action to build a contingent of crop of young cadres who are politically conscious, professionally competent, conscientious and disciplined

- Improve the level of our members
- Invest in ideological and academic training
- Institutionalize political education
- campaign to wipe out illiteracy in the ranks of our movement , as part of the broader campaign for illiteracy free society, insist on every young person to be trained, educated and consider legislating right to work thereafter

139. Will only succeed if we continuously produces cadres who are conscious, grounded on the ideological, political, academic and moral training of ANC members.

- Recruitment backed by national political education programme at all levels, dealing with political, social and economic transformation, ethics and organising.
- Programme to raise the level of literacy, education and skills among members
- Political training of students and young intellectuals
- Prevent abuse of power or office for private or factional gain and individuals using organisational platforms to campaign for positions.
- Rules on lobbying supported, included in congress rules and enforced by a specific structure
- Condemned factionalism, use of slates during congresses
- Develop new measures to stop negative practices and not just condemn them while allowing them to take root.
- Without political discipline cannot achieve our goals – firm consistent action, all levels, include political education, correcting personal and social conduct, disciplinary action
- The use of courts being automatic self-expulsion
- Branches strengthen work in communities, political leadership, socio-economic transformation, local democracy, development. Ward-based, allow sub-branches in VDs. NEC develop guidelines on launching branches, sub-branches.
- Continuous membership audits and adds instruments to verify functionality and activism of each member not just the numbers.
- Fix membership system, temporary card for a new member



- Probation of new member for six weeks before actively participate on organisation decision making or election thereof

### Campaign Thematic Areas

140. For ANCYL to remain rooted and championing interest of young people must not be championing youth interest but must be seen to be championing youth interest through campaigns, below are some of the thematic campaigns areas in which must be seriously considered:
141. **Education and skills development:** Working together with other sectors such as unions, school governing bodies, institutions of higher learning, industry and others, we must urgently re-open the debate about the centrality of the *culture of learning and teaching*, its place in the future of our country, and the skills and the skills acquisition programme we need to create an economy that responds to challenges of poverty, unemployment, underdevelopment, the urban-rural divide, gender imbalances and gender exploitation;
142. **Access to the economy:** Congress must seriously examine economic relations as they obtain, the ANC and government economic policy with a view to contributing to the acceleration of the economic transformation of our country. Our proposals must deliberately and consciously seek to benefit young people who constitute the majority of South African population;
143. **Health and healthy lifestyles:** The health of young people is a measure of the health of a nation. Young people face the risk of many diseases, including lifestyle diseases. It is important to broaden the health debate and to examine the health profile of young people so that we are able to respond correctly and comprehensively to the nation's health challenge;
144. **Civic consciousness:** One of the unintended consequences of post-apartheid South Africa is that we might be building a society in which young people think that society owes them everything while they owe nothing to society. We see this during so-called service delivery protests where protestors destroy the little public that exists to aid the delivery they seek. The question we need to ponder over is whether a people like that would volunteer to defend their country were it attacked by another tomorrow. Congress must mandate the incoming NEC to examine this issue further and to develop a civic consciousness campaign; and
145. **Strengthening local municipalities:** Much of the service that the citizenry requires from government comes from local municipalities. Yet this sphere of government, especially in rural areas, lacks the skills to drive any meaningful service delivery programme. The ANCYL must develop a programme of strengthening local

municipalities so that they are able to respond as they should to the needs of the people.

### **Eligibility for executive structure's**

146. While ANCYL its preparatory school of young people and therefore do not require stringent requirements in order to be eligible for office, but being re-established in 1991 it means by now it broadly established with membership and being youth league of ruling party, some level of understanding the organization is required before assuming office. Therefore it suggested that:
147. A member to be eligible to be nominated for NEC to have been a member for not less than 3 years
148. A member to be eligible to be nominated for PEC to have been a member for not less than 2 years
149. A member to be eligible to be nominated for NEC to have been a member for not less than 18 months
150. A member to be eligible to be nominated for BEC to have been a member for not less than 1 year, unless it's a new branch

### **Qualifying a branch**

151. We must ponder whether our branches have been able to rise to occasion as contained in 24<sup>th</sup> National Congress Discussion Documents which outline tasks of a branch as follows:
  - ANCYL branch should be primary organ for maintaining direct contact with the youth where they live, at a local level. They serve as the organic nexus between the ANCYL and the youth community, between the membership and leadership structures of the movement;
  - The mobilization and political education of our youth rests squarely on the shoulders of our branches. In the post-Apartheid context, a strong ANC YL branch is both a school of politics where members are trained into community leaders and agents for community development;
  - It should serve as an information centre for the local youth;
  - It should serve as a creative centre for innovative ways of campaigns and new songs.
  - It should serve as direct contact with community based NGO's , Social Clubs and Sports teams within its locality;

- It should be visible in all community campaigns throughout the year and not only during elections and congresses.
152. Further in every Congress, there is significant lamenting on strengthening tasks of branches, we must seriously consider means through which we can increase the systematic demands for a branch to qualify for attend and participate any organisational gathering. If we place a number of strict political demands on a branch, related to organisational work, we may achieve the twin outcomes of warding off manipulation whilst systematically pushing branches to do necessary political work in their wards.
153. We must consider institutionalizing performance of monitoring and community work. This is with regards the matter of our structures keeping inventories of schools, clinics, roads, and water and electric services in their wards. These inventories must contain details of material: books, desks, personnel and enrolment numbers for schools; nursing staff, doctor visits, medication availability etc for clinics; radius of settlements around water taps/general availability of water, state of roads infrastructure, electricity and housing etc.

### **Electoral Process**

154. For decades the Youth League has had more or less the same traditions and procedures in terms of how internal elections are conducted. In fact it derived these traditions from the ANC consistently with its relationship with the mother body. However, since 1994, our proximity to state power and resources, as well as operating under democratic and politically free conditions, has had an impact on the internal make-up, systems, values and traditions of the Movement, including the Youth League.
155. Indeed certain things have happened and continue to happen to impacting negatively on the organisation and its public standing. Counter-revolution, within and outside the organisation comes in various forms and always aims to weaken the revolution and its revolutionary organs. The consequence is a weakened movement defocused from the strategic and revolutionary tasks of our time. The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.
156. One of the sources of major problems and weakness in the organisation is the issue of contest around leadership in relation to congresses. There has been allegations and accusations that organisation is vulnerable to votes being bought, people treated as voting fodder, allegations of intimidation and rigging, entrenchment of factionalism and negative lobbying and so on. We must agree that these alien tendencies are

destructive and we should a way to deal with them. Otherwise, the organisation will die a slow painful death.

157. The 2005 NGC of the ANC began a conversation around possibilities of electoral reform arising out of all the challenges we have stated above. The central thesis around these considerations was the fact that the ANC needs to develop organisational systems that are reflective of the present political situation.

158. The observation is that our organisational systems, including how we conduct election of leadership, were evolved out of an exile situation and conditions of conducting an illegal revolutionary campaign. Thus secrecy and strict control of leadership processes was a strategic necessity to counter the machinations of apartheid infiltration. As a consequence of this, the organisation has retained the tradition of managed elections in which the availability of candidates is not openly canvassed. The tail-end of this situation is that availabilities are canvassed but rather in a secretive, corrupt and therefore destructive manner.

159. The congress has a duty to reintroduce the debate on Electoral Reform. The suggestion is that we should consider *Direct Democracy* as a model. This means that we take the '*right of every member to elect and be elected*' to another level. The organisation should introduce the following Electoral Reforms:

- Guided by the model of direct democracy where in every member of the organisation has a right to vote.
- Guided by the principles of 'one member (person), one vote', member control and 'the right of every member to elect and be elected', etc. Considering introduce a system of primaries; learning from many progressive democratic political parties in Africa and elsewhere in the world. Allow for open lobbying and canvassing, in a regulated environment, in line with our best of traditions and learning from others elsewhere.

160. Congress should mandate the NEC to appoint a high level political and technical task team to look into the alternative model, principles guiding it and the logistics that arise as a result of a new electoral system. The NEC should report in the next National General Council.

161. In order for Electoral Reform to bear fruit and make sense, it must be implemented parallel with other organisational reforms and interventions such as political education, as well as having genuine political will to confront the devils that weaken organisation.

162. Further with the contestation for the position in ANCYL drawing interest as they are it is paramount that the process of electing leadership be transparent, free and fair as to bring credibility and outcome that can be accepted by all those who are democrats.
163. From a branch level organization must insist on pre audit and pre BGM convened to confirm who are members in good standing for purposes of the said AGM or BGM for certainty on ANCYL processes and eligibility of members who will participate.
164. For Regional Congress, Provincial Congress and National Congress, the organization has to consider systems which strengthen electoral and nomination process, conducting and or administration of electoral process going forward should not be handled not by elected or appointed leadership but independent electoral body must be employed to handle the process.

### **Organisation design of the ANCYL**

165. Organisational and political work is performed at branch level by members, supporters and volunteers. The Regional Executive Committee was conceived as a coordinating structure responsible for knitting together the disparate branch initiatives into a coherent political strategy within a region or metro. This coordinating work is intense and demanding serious commitment, availability and capability on comrades elected. The organisation should consider increasing the number of REC members to 20 in order to improve their human capital
166. It is unimaginable that we would increase the numbers of the NEC and PECs. They are already heavily endowed and any increase would most likely hinder greater efficiency, robust debate, sufficient time for political and theoretical work and other related benefits.
167. Instead, the organisation should rely more on a system of *Sub-Committees*, which makes more sense in terms of participation rate, democratisation and giving members more voice, in line with member control. Sub-Committees should begin to have *Plenaries*, atleast once a year. Plenaries must be representative and constitutional as structures that *recommend* to NEC for ratification. The Sub-Committees allows for young people of various talents and skills to partake in shaping ideas and programs of the organisation, deepens internal debate and reduces levels of gatekeeping.
168. While an argument can be put that term of office of ANCYL structures are short putting an organization into permanent congress fever while not providing sufficient time to discharge organizational work but it suggested that for now term of offices to

remain NEC three (3) year term; PEC to two (2) year term; REC eighteen months (18) months and BEC twelve (12) months.

169. Financial standing of the YL is not attended poses a threat to organizational rebuilding
170. ANCYL National Office, we must consider that in addition to President, Secretary General, Treasurer General, Head of organizing and campaigns, Spokesperson fulltime we add Head of Research and Policy to be full time whom those outside officials must be drawn from NWC members
171. In provinces in addition to Provincial Secretary we must consider making Head of organizing and campaigns full time.
172. If we are reinforce and focus on the task and work of branches as basic unit of the organization therefore capacity of the immediate upper structure which is REC has to be strengthened hence we must consider depending on resources for regional Secretaries to be full time
173. **Revival of Masupatsela:** With modernisation of society, it means at young age, children have many influences and exposed to various political persuasions and interests. It is noticeable with information in their fingertips they mature earlier than even in yester years. Therefore ANCYL must create platform and orientate their childhood into being future of the ANCYL while empowering and developing them through creative means like culture, fashion, technological material, games, cartoons, heritage, movies, music etc into being conscious and patriotic future of these people's organisations.

#### ***Innovation in membership, administration and communications***

174. The one area that we have under-explored in the past 20 years, is the value and utility of information and communications technologies in running the organisation and reaching out to young people. The time has come that we adapt faster or pay the price of slow catch-up later.
175. For instance, as a start, we should move the membership of the organisation into an electronic system and interactive database. Indeed not all of the membership will be processed electronically, but all of it can be captured electronically, with a smart interactive software operated nationally and provincially, regionally and locally. Whilst other regions of the country catch-up, there is no reason why we should not engage a significant portion of the membership of the organisation electronically.

176. The following should be guiding principles:

Modernisation

Adapting to better ways of mobilising and organising

Making the organisation more mobile

Improving systems and administration

177. It is possible that after a careful audit and piloting of the electronic system, the organisation can capture 70% its membership electronically. For now, the 70% is speculation. Among others, the following benefits will accrue:

- The organisation will minimise fraudulent membership activities.
- Membership audits will be easier, faster and cheaper. When auditing branches higher structures will rely less on warm bodies but the system.
- The system, if well managed, will give the organisation accuracy and precision.
- The organisation will have the capability to profile its membership and know how to deploy abundant talents and skills in the organisation and in society.
- Communication with lower structures will be faster, cheaper and effective.
- The NEC will be able to communicate programs, resolutions and press statements directly with all members. And so will discussion documents filter down or up quicker.
- Enquiries and geographic data will be easier to maintain.
- The organisation can generate all sorts of statistics for various purposes.
- Government, private sector and civil society opportunities will be easier to communicate, including soliciting legislative and policy submissions etc.

178. Already we can see benefits of linking with social media. Clearly there are endless possibilities with technology. However, we will still maintain that in the transition/migration period, we have a dual process and that, if successfully implemented, members will still be required to print out their complete membership forms and submit them in the branch that they belong to.

179. Technology and smartphone mobile technology has reasonably penetrated the youth population and our membership too. The time to move beyond hosting a website is now!

180. ICT has to play a critical role in ensuring that ANCYL is revolutionarised to be dynamic and agile in its interaction with young people, as ANCYL we must resolve ourselves as to how we exploit the available technology to mobilise and advance organisational programs, we must exploit alternatives means of media whom are

accessible and provide unmediated personal interaction with youth and society in general. We must streamline our work and utilise the available social networks such as face book, twitter, instagram etc.

### **Progressive Youth Alliance (ANCYL; YCLSA; SASCO & COSAS)**

181. What glues PYA together is not merely giving message of support in each other gatherings or collaboration during SRC elections, but centrally we bound together by shared perspective of creating national democratic society as tactic or strategy therefore we are guided NDR as guide to action, which is program to liberate the whole oppressed and therefore alliance of these independent organizations is born out of historic realities and not friendship of leadership and thus it should never be collapsed by leadership dynamics. Our common strategic objective is the creation of national democratic society. This necessarily mean the full implementation of our program, the freedom charter.
182. ANCYL as home of all progressive young people between 14 – 35 regardless of class, creed and race, is strategic located to provide leadership to PYA as organization of the whole progressive youth which membership that cut across all PYA structures and only organ in the PYA that mobilizes across all sectors of the youth, however that impose on ANCYL a duty to continuous earn that responsibility by uniting PYA and all progressive youth.
183. It follows than that ANCYL does not only have duty to represent its members but represent aspiration of the whole youth and therefore it has to find linkages and working relations with progressive civil society organizations and other progressive structures of young people. This can also be achieved if PYA (ANCYL, YCLSA, SASCO, COSAS, SUCA, and YCS) is alive not for purposes of only attending each gatherings but its relationship is mutual reinforcing and respecting with programmatic relations and not completion among each other.
184. In the recent past besides election campaign PYA has had limited coherent programmatic relations in championing youth interest and contest in SRC elections remains a stubborn challenge. Meaning it may have to consider strengthening structural relations.
185. On political management of SRC elections, contestation of PYA structures among themselves only divides the electorate and more often than not allow weak opposition mileage. It is proposed therefore that all levels of PYA where they exist that it's working committees be responsible for deployment while other PYA structures contest under the banner of SASCO in institutions of higher learning.



## ANCYL & Young Workers

186. The ANC Youth League as an organisation concerned, as part of its foundational mandate, with the persistent task to hegemonies the African National Congress as an organisation and to popularise the broader cause of freedom and transformation led by the ANC. As an organic outcome of dedicated struggle the ANC overtime has cultivated a recognisable capability to reach a variety of constituencies in the effort to organise for revolutionary change and uniting the widest range of social forces behind the all-encompassing struggle against colonialism and apartheid. Principally among these social forces is the working class of South Africa as the social class on whose shoulders the totality of the political economy was to evolve to its modern outlook. Parallel to the unfolding of that historical process was the evolution of the class structure of society as a whole. So it is impossible to narrate the development of the South African state and its economy without examining the concurrent evolving position, role and character of the South African working class.
187. The task at hand is to understand the space of organised workers and that of the unorganised workers, as an arena that serves to catalyse radical social change as a practical consequence of struggles at the shop floor, the working class's location in social and class relations and as a consequence of the historical cleavages that persist in the work place and the wider space of labour relations. The initial presumption is that the class position of those that do not control the means of production should necessarily cause them to be unionised and organised in a particular historically determined direction than the opposite but history has taught us that even that space the hegemonic contest blocks automated answers demanding from the liberation movement a deliberate effort at a brand of working class consciousness. From that deliberate effort emerges a unique worker chiselled in definite political circumstance; the prototype of that shop steward is that whose awareness has grindingly constructed the South African Trade union movement as we know it. Therefore to develop a worker and a worker leader who has holistic understanding his position as a worker in relation to that which he occupies in relation to society at large ought to be central to wider effort at building a new cadre.
188. In the context of this historical reflection South African working class has not been static in its composition and the posture taken by its advanced sections and its organisations. The common thread however is its mutation. It has been subject to the mirage of historic changes as such its current outlook entails changes of the pre and

post 1994 eras. The emergence of the managerial strata is one of the unintended consequences of the apartheid power structure.

189. The profound expansion of that stratum in the post 1994 presents a new challenge to all organised forces as it does to the emerging class itself: the challenge to carve a niche area in a transforming environment. As history would have it a formidable portion this group are young people. These young people, as per the dictates of the capitalist environment, hold precarious and menial jobs, semi-stable jobs, skilled and specialising jobs and managerial jobs in line with both inhibitions and opportunities of our time.
190. Young people do not constitute a class by themselves; they are subject to the prevailing class formations of society. The intellectual and all political discourse born of the material need to respond to these contemporary questions necessarily must demand us as the organisation to look at how the organisational and operational structure becomes relevant to this class or strata.
191. The debate about fashioning the organisational machinery and programme to respond to matters affecting these young people arises from the understanding that it in our foundational mandate and certainly in service of transforming society.
192. The manner of carrying out this programme needs to recognise the fact that all labour matters belong to the workplace and the workplace organisations however the participation of the movement is to enhance the ability of the organisation to drive debates of transformation as involved drivers than distant participants, in a manner of speaking to lead the debate. The task of providing leadership actualised. In driving this engagement in form of campaigns the organisation will, in an organic fashion, give life to the noble principle of democratic participation. To this end it may be useful for the organisation to, in a participatory manner, identify a wide range of issues around which a campaign targeting young people and society in general would be driven with the intention of placing the ANC YL as driver of critical discourse. The structures will have to integrate this systematic approach into programmes over a period of time.
193. It naturally follows that structures of the mass democratic movement that organise in different places and should not only participate but should have working partnership with. In this way the organisation's intentions of organisational growth are possible. Many COSATU unions have formed Youth Sections and these form a critical space to enhance the viability of the platform. The Youth League will be engaging at the level of contact with the systemic matter of transformation both in the work place with recognition of the totality of other players

## **Financial Mobilization**

194. As stated above ideas can only be translated into action and reality if backed by organization which requires finances to carry out those programs. ANCYL has to attend to hard question of how it becomes financial sustainable as to carry forward its programs, ANCYL has to be financial liquid if it is to maintain its independency and activism
195. ANYL must consider re-establishing its investment arm and other commercial legal ventures as proper means of financial mobilization
196. For members to take ownership of their organisation and be jealous of their organisation, they have to relate with the organisation at personal level. When organisation is in this financial dire state it must considered whether each member capable must not be encouraged to donate a minimum of R 10 per month and or consider debit orders from all members with income as members must take responsibility for their organisation

## **Conclusion**

197. 24<sup>th</sup> ANCYL National Congress define the generational mission and that is possible if organisation is vibrant, campaigning, dynamic, agile, capable and therefore equal to the task
198. We are called upon to build a resilient and agile organisation capable of adapting to material conditions and remaining a true champion of young people in which it's true vanguard of youth interest, independent of state institutions.
199. ANCYL has to be entrenched among youth mass base and follow the mass line.
200. It is not a matter of choice but to learn from lessons of history in order to build an organisation of the future by being far-sighted in our approach to problem

