



ARISE

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DEFINING THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF THE ANC YOUTH LEAGUE



By: **ANCYL President
Malusi Gigaba**

In April 1944, as you all know, the ANC, influenced by the independent experience and impatience of the youth, founded a Youth League of its own that would rally the youth into the struggle for national liberation and champion their political and socio-economic interests.

1944 marked then the culmination of this dream and effort of African youth to belong, not just to any youth organisation, but that of the African National Congress which, they believed, was the national unity front, uniting all our people in action and leading them in the battle for national freedom!

None can today refute the indelible contribution that this organisation has made in setting this country on a course of NO RETURN!

Indeed, its major contribution to the ANC yet was in infusing it with the ideology of radical African Nationalism and the practice and culture of VOLUNTEERING!

Historians and revolutionaries are all in consent that the formation of this organisation was to have a lasting impact on the South African polity and gave successive generations of youth a PURPOSE AND MISSION!

When volunteers were sought to collect the demands in preparation for the 1955 Congress of the People, the youth of the ANC volunteered and some, such as the late Dr. Diliza Mji (senior) even left their medical studies at Wits University for a while just to participate in this campaign.

Throughout the many decades that followed the founding of the ANCYL, whether it was for mass mobilisation for mass action, or to swell the ranks of UmKhonto We-Sizwe or the underground, the youth of the ANC again volunteered to put themselves on the frontline when it became clear that the struggle demanded supreme sacrifice for freedom!

1944 presented an historic and unique opportunity not only for the people of South Africa and the ANC, but for the ANCYL even more.

The ANCYL is an organisation of struggle, born by the urgency to fight and defeat apartheid. It had for fifty years engaged in this struggle and hence positioned its entire organisational and political machinery towards the achievement of this goal.

The political achievement of 1994 required of the ANCYL to re-orient itself and renew its machinery to focus on the new challenges of the new era.

The principal challenge before the youth remains the accomplishment of the struggle for the creation of a new non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, united and prosperous society.

At the 21st National Congress, we have declared this as the mission of our generation of youth the achievement of which would itself signal the fulfilment of the national democratic revolution – the accomplishment of the central task of national liberation.

This was based on an understanding that ours is a generation whose mission and hence tasks differs from that of the generations of youth that preceded it all of which had, since 1944, to fulfil the objective of “freedom in our lifetime”. This mission had its tasks, central to which was the fight against and destruction of the apartheid regime.

At the specific moment of the fulfilment of this mission, logically the generations of youth at that moment would need to re-define themselves, their mission and draw

up new tasks which, this time, must propel society and the democratic revolution towards the ultimate conclusion of the task of the national liberation – to create and live in a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society which all generations of people before could only dream about, fight for, lay the foundations for, but not live in!

Today, as this generation of youth, we are challenged to pursue this, our mission, in conditions when there is no longer an apartheid regime and dispensation that we must destroy, but a democratic, popular government and dispensation to build employing different strategy and tactics that suit our new conditions of struggle.

Of course, our struggle, as we have said before, is not over. Poverty remains pestilent and persistent, continuing to be a characteristic feature of our society away from which we must move.

What we are saying is that apartheid was more than a regime and dispensation that you can, at a stroke, eliminate. It was an order that infected and infested the entire socio-economic fabric of society such that, even today, poverty remains the characteristic feature of black people and wealth, of white people.

In the last seven years, the ANCYL has been seized of trying to de-define and recreate itself which task, we are confident, that the 21st National Congress has addressed.

Quite clearly, a constellation of historical factors has determined it that the ANCYL should occupy a unique and advantageous position as the youth organisation of the ANC. Accordingly, it has a duty to fully optimise the advantages that accrue from this fact that the ANC is now a governing party to both built itself and champion youth interests, and to develop a unique character as a political, mass, youth, organisation, of the ANC!

As essentially a **youth** organisation, some

- robust engagement with capital, government and society at large, as well as other institutions that have the capacity and an obligation to intervene in youth development,
- occupying the forward trenches of the ideological and political struggles, occupying the centre stage of the battle of ideas in our society guided by the conviction that it is always the task of the youth organisation to defend and advance the revolution and deal with challenges to transformation
- linked to the above, it must serve as a cadreship university of the ANC, where all future cadres of the ANC are produced, trained, nurtured. Cadre development must become part of its preoccupation and unique contribution to the ANC,
- being at the forefront of social campaigns such as fighting AIDS, substance abuse among youth, women and children abuse, illiteracy and others,
- of course, above all these matters, it must lead the struggle to combat racism and sexism in our society, especially among the youth in order to raise in our country a cadre of youth that epitomises the new society we are building.

Of course, some will ask the question, logically, what does this 'robustness' mean? And, others, will say, but there are more pillars that must anchor and define this unique character! Let us discuss and elaborate all these!

As a mass youth organisation, it relies first and foremost on the quantity of youth that join it, who upon joining it then get schooled into the ways of the ANC and the objectives of this struggle and hence transformed into cadres that can move society.

Its mass character must find reflection in its ability to attract the diverse sectors and experiences of the South African youth

especially African working class and poor youth.

This new era in which we operate requires that we manage innovatively to move the youth in all their political, social and economic spheres of interest, dynamically to merge the social, recreational and economic interests into a single political movement.

This shall mean that we create an image of ourselves that is modern and dynamic, according to which young people identify the ANCYL as an organisation where their all-round aspirations are fulfilled and given free and creative expression.

Of course, the ANCYL derives its character from the ANC and, in turn, informs the character of the ANC!

It must become the custodian and bulwark of ANC unity and cohesion, keenly engaging with all the matters that have to do with the building, growth and development of the ANC.

Without abdicating our responsibility to build the ANCYL, we must play a central role in the building of the ANC, its organisational strength and political cohesion.

Further, and in pursuance of our character as a youth organisation representing particularly the poor and working youth ourselves, we must forge stronger and closer relations with the working class organisations, the SACP and COSATU.

History has determined it that the ANCYL should occupy a leadership position within the youth sectors in our country. This leadership position we must further enhance through our programmes for political and socio-economic transformation, through leading and being part of every struggle and every victory won by the youth.

In strengthening our political relations with the progressive youth alliance, we must endeavour to ensure that this alliance itself articulates, enhances and affirms this leadership position of the ANCYL.



In defence of our revolution

Given the increasing international role and stature of the ANC and our President in particular, and the progress we are making to fundamentally transform our country, it comes as no surprise that its domestic and international opponents should be displeased with it and will seek its destruction, principally, through causing fissures within it.

It is clearly in this context that we should understand the current attacks on the movement aimed, particularly, at the President, and upon this understanding we should, as the youth organisation of the ANC, hasten to close ranks and defend it from these attacks.

We must act with the conviction that the leadership of the ANC are one and act as a collective in their leadership of both this organisation and country. The attacks on the President do not arise from the rank and file membership of the ANC, but from forces outside our movement that are hell-bent on imposing their own views and leadership on our people.

And, all these attacks have to do, not with real failures to lead the movement or country, but with all the matters on which these forces differ with the President, the ANC and government.

Unity of the Movement

The remarks we made closing the 21st National Congress, we must pay urgent attention to the divisions existing in various ANC provinces, especially in view of the pending ANC provincial conferences and the various challenges that will confront the movement that may, if not very well managed, exacerbate these fissures.

The ANCYL has a real possibility, and a responsibility, to handle the political preparations for ANC conferences in a manner that will enhance organisational unity and cohesion, making serious, matured and focused political interventions

that will guide and direct ANC branches themselves and refocus them on the strategic political challenges for the organisation.

In this regard, the first NEC meeting resolved that we hold a special NEC just before the first wave of these provincial conferences to discuss our role ahead of and during these conferences.

To fulfil all these challenges and tasks, we must forge unity and cohesion within the ANCYL itself. This unity must be built in practice and through robust debates and respect for democratic centralism!

STATEMENT OF THE FIRST ANC YOUTH LEAGUE NEC MEETING

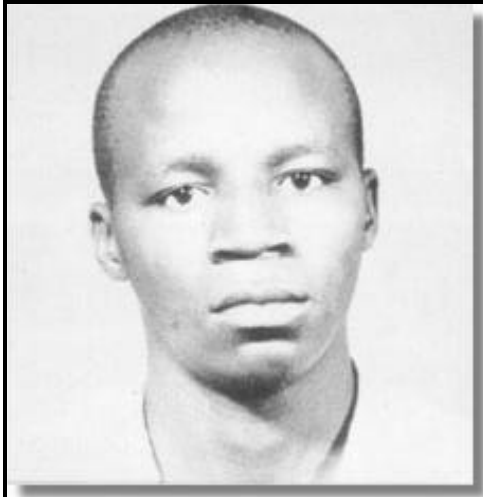
The NEC discussed the challenges facing the unity within the ANC, the Youth League and the broader alliance. We also discussed the recent war waged against the ANC leadership and President Thabo Mbeki in particular.

We are convinced that there are no cracks within the organisation, but the ANC and the President are under attack not from within the ANC membership but from distractive external forces that are opposed to the agenda of social transformation and the emergence of independent African leadership.

As the Youth League, we remain unwavering in our confidence in the President and our belief that he will and must lead the ANC and this country until the end of his last term of office.

The NEC is united in the commitment of going all out of its way to preach its position on President Mbeki to all ANC, ANCYL and Alliance structures and to expose all those that wish to sow disunity in the ANC and confuse our people by fighting the President. The Youth League supports the investigation by Safety and Security Minister Cde Steve Tshwete and further appeals for the expedition of this process for the benefit of the ANC and the whole country.

We also support the process of bringing Cuban teachers into our country. We believe that this process will help to increase the participation of particularly African students in the study of Mathematics, Science and Technology.



We, the delegates to the 21st National Congress of the ANC Youth League, declare that the struggle to: -

- Build a united South Africa;
- Deracialise South Africa towards a truly non-racial society;
- Rid our society of gender oppression;
- Democratise South Africa.
- Ensure a better life for all.

is the mission of our generation.

We salute with pride the generations of youth before us, who have fought for an end to Apartheid rule.

The 21st Congress remembers the youth of the ANC of the 40's and 50's; of Umkhonto weSizwe and the ANC Youth Section.

We remember the students and youth of Soweto, who 25 years ago rose and set our country on a course of no return.

Congress Declaration

We remember Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu and the young lions of the 80's.

Learning from their example, we recommit ourselves as youth at the start of the African Century to: -

- Fight against racism, sexism, xenophobia, tribalism and all forms of discrimination.
- Take an active part in the political, social and economic life of our society;
- Uphold the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution;
- Work for a caring society that respects the human dignity of all;
- Contribute to the unity of all South African people, black and white;
- Work for the renaissance of Africa and for a just world order, for an end to poverty and war.

The ideal of a united, non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous and democratic South Africa must be the guiding ideal of every young South African.

Resolution on Rural Development

- § There must be a policy education process on land-oriented policies.
- § Youth must be trained on land ownership processes.
- § We must lead advocacy programmes on land ownership by youth.
- § Conditions of service for ABET teachers must be improved.
- § Building of libraries and resource centers.
- § § The Youth Commission, MPL's and MP's to set up units that focus on supporting rural development initiatives.
- § Development of a strategy to engage Khula, Ntsika, Umsobomvu fund and other agencies for youth related rural development initiatives.
- § A loan or Mortgage bonds are needed to support youth for rural housing.
- § Establishment of Village Banks.

Resolution on Environment and sustainable development

- a) To have a program of environmental education in the YL, including the establishment of Eco-desks.
- b) To encourage branches to initiate local clean-up campaigns.
- c) Forge links with international bodies.
- d) To observe national days on the environment like Arbor day
- e) To link environment to tourism and job creation programs.

Resolution on Science and Technology

The NEC to convene a seminar on science and technology, which should be duplicated by regions and provinces. A section on Science and technology be established at all levels of the executive committees.

On Information Technology & Rural Development

- § Engage Vodacom, MTN and Cell-C on establishing Internet cafes in rural areas.
- § Engage Communications Department to run a rural IT literacy education in our villages.

Resolution on Local Government

- § That YMC's should be part of the ANC Youth League Branches as ex-officio members.
- § YL must initiate a process of establishing the Local Youth Development Forums (LYDF) where they don't exist and strengthen them where they exist..
- § YL must engage communities to be part of the budget formulation and the compilation of the IDP's, LED's etc.
- § YL to engage municipalities to award tenders to qualifying previously disadvantaged contractors.
- § Municipalities should establish business service centers in order to give advice to the aspiring businesspersons and small, micro and medium enterprises (SMME).
- § YL to ensure that municipalities have friendly facilities towards the disabled including allowing them access to projects, and other forms of employment.

"Youth Development for the African Century"

Resolution on Economic Transformation

- § To support the initiatives of the ANC-led government in the economic transformation agenda with the focus on employment creation.
- § Use the state institutions i.e. Umsobomvu Fund, Khula, Ntsika, NDA, IDC, Land Bank and others, to explore the possibilities of creating a Youth Bank, Credit Union and a Food Bank, to lend financial, material and advisory support to the youth in the development of their enterprises.
- § Engage government in the rollout of the Tourism and Cultural Learnership programs to prioritize training of young people.
- § Affirming the institution of the National Youth Service in order to develop skills for the youth.
- § Engage private sector and SOEs to provide mentorship and in-service training programmes to the youth.
- § To encourage Inter-Provincial and Inter-Regional co-operation of ANCYL structures around projects and campaigns focusing on Youth Development.



Programme of Action ...

The ANC Youth League will, between now and the next national congress, continue to build strong branches, prepare for provincial congresses, champion Socio-Economic interests of young people, consolidate our financial sustainability and continue to forge strong international relations.

Therefore based on the identified programme objectives for the organisation, the following programmes will be pursued.

Organisational Development

Strengthening branches

Continue the work of building stronger branches. To continue with the programme of visitations of provinces, regions and branches.

To set up ward task teams towards re-aligning our branches in line with the ANC one ward one branch.

To also set up regional task teams to ensure that regions are aligned to districts.

Cadre Development Programme

To continue with the current cadre development programme and to filter it down to branches.

To embark on a campaign dealing with capacity building.

Administration

To restructure Head Quarters to be in a position to meet the new challenges and obligations.

Campaigns

To take up the following single-issue based campaigns:

Illiteracy

Environment

Culture Heritage and Morality

Sports and recreation.

Anti-Crime Important dates on our calendar

Gender

To embark on a campaign to call upon young women in the YL above the age of 18 years to be obliged to join the ANC and the Women's League.

To identify joint programmes with the WL.

To work tirelessly for a young women's desk in the WL.

To involve the alliance partners in practical work of fighting and uplifting the value of women in society.

Engage the Gender Youth Commission around the position of Commercial Sex Workers and

POLITICAL PROGRAMMES

Peace & Stability

To ensure that we rise to the challenge of ensuring that our political and principled decisions relating to our strategic co-operation with the IFPYB & IFP are not being undermined.

Nation Building & New Patriotism

To initiate campaigns beyond dialogue on combating racism.

To embark on a mass education against racism, tribalism and ethnicity.

To continue with the programme of engagement with Afrikaner Youth organisations.

Progressive Youth Alliance

To convene the 2nd National Summit of the PYA.

To work towards the revival of PYA structures and to engage with them on programmatic relations particularly COSAS.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Policy Work

To pursue the work on the development of a perspective document on youth entrepreneurship and economic transformation.

To develop a perspective on youth and the economy.

Institutions of Youth Development

To popularise the work of the National Youth Commission and South African Youth Commission.

To highlight the victories of the organisation by achieving the Umsobomvu Fund and the National Skills Development Fund.

To lobby government departments to establish youth desks.

To enhance co-operation between the provincial and national structures of youth. To further ensure a national framework on the youth commissions legislation to ensure uniformity.

To influence the development of integrated development plans of the local government structures.

To work towards the establishment of local government youth units.

To lobby for the enactment of the National Youth Policy by government.

Contact your provincial leadership for a detailed programme

June 16 preps on track

As the country will be marking the 25th anniversary of the dedication by youth in the people's struggle, the ANC Youth League will stage celebrations under the theme "***Building Non-Racialism: a youth vision for the 21st Century***".

The ANCYL's national event will take place in the Western Cape Province and shall be addressed by the ANC YL President and other ANC NEC.

Since June has been declared the month of the youth, a number of build up activities will take place as from the International Children's Day (June 1st) until June 16th. There will be other events taking place after June 16 ranging from rallies to seminars.

On the same day, the National Youth Commission will stage a celebration that will be addressed by President Thabo Mbeki at the Hector Peterson Memorial Square in Soweto. The Youth League will be actively participating in this event.

Therefore, members and supporters of the Youth League are encouraged to take part in this event.

Comrades are kindly requested to liaise with their provincial leadership for more information pertaining to provincial events on this day.

EC : Phola - 083 994 4093
FS : Saki - 082 773 1009
GP : Valentine - 082 773 1012
KZN : Sihle - 082 551 4945
MP : Screamer - 082 773 1014
NC : Maye - 082 773 1011
NP : Harris - 082 427 2367
NW : Supra - 082 416 3145
WC (Nat. Event): Jabu - 082 773 1015

ANC YOUTH LEAGUE REMEMBERS THE YOUTH OF 1976!



Pic: Sam Ndzima

Meet your leadership

Officials

President:

Malusi Gigaba,

Deputy President:

Reuben Mohlaloga,

Secretary General:

Fikile Mbalula,

Deputy Secretary General:

Vuyiswa Tulelo,

Treasurer General:

Nikiwe Num

NWC five officials and

Secretary for Organisational Development:

Khotso Khumalo,

Secretary for Information and Media,

Zibuse Zuma,

Secretary for Gender:

Thandi Tobias,

Secretary for Social Transformation:

Songezo Mjongile

Secretary for Governance and Legislative

Affairs: Archie Lucas

Additional Members

Andile Nkuhlu

Bradley Swartland

David Makhura

David Masondo

Fiona Tregenna

Goodenough Kodwa

Jabu Mbalula

Mahlengi Bhengu

Nomfanelo Kota

Silence Makhubela

Sipho Shongwe

Tracy Malatji

Vusi Mzimela

