

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

VETERANS LEAGUE

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 ANC Veterans League

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ANC VETERANS LEAGUE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

28 – 30 JULY 2023

DECLARATION

We, the delegates to the Third National Conference of the ANC Veteran's League (ANCVL), gathered at Birchwood Hotel & OR Tambo Conference Centre, in Ekurhuleni, Gauteng, on 28th – 30th July 2023, under the theme: "Renewal of the ANC to advance the National Democratic Revolution".

This Third National Conference of the ANC Veterans League was convened by the National Task Team (NTT) appointed by the ANC NEC and given a tight timeframe.

The Conference received the following reports:

- The Convenor's Political Report
- The Coordinator's Report on the work of the National Task Team
- Policy discussion document
- Renewal discussion document
- Discussion document on Organising, Campaigns and Membership
- Policy Framework on Coalitions
- Discussion document on Money Politics and Revolutionary Morality

The discussion documents formed a very strong basis for the Conference to focus on how the ANC Veterans League can contribute to effective policies and concrete programmes that will decisively push forward the fundamental Renewal of the ANC in order to improve the quality of life and well-being of the people of South Africa.

RENEWAL OF THE ANC TO ADVANCE THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

PRESIDENT
Snuki Zikalala

DEPUTY PRESIDENT
Mavuso Msimang

SECRETARY GENERAL
Ilva MacKay-Langa

DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL
Connie September

TREASURER GENERAL
Fazel Randera

As the veterans of the ANC – the men and women who dedicated our lives to the struggle for a free, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, united and prosperous South Africa – we spent this weekend at this Conference focusing on the primary concerns and aspirations of the people occupied the centre stage.

All delegates broke into three Conference Commissions where they deliberated on the challenges facing the ANC and the critical tasks facing our country and paid dedicated attention to the matters of strategy, organisation, policies and programmes that must be improved and implemented to advance the fundamental transformation of South Africa.

As delegates to this conference, we now declare

A. On our journey to this Conference

We are veterans who are ANC members, 60 (sixty) years of age or older, who have served the ANC and the movement over an unbroken period of 40 (forty) years and are members of the ANC in good standing. Accordingly, we belong to a core of members who have **given the better part of their lives** to the work of the ANC as a servant of the people.

We have successfully laid the foundation of a credible, legitimate and reconstituted the Veterans League across the country. The spirit of the conference has been one of principled unity, discipline, openness, humility and humbleness.

We stand on the shoulders of the giants of our liberation movement and the entire generation who activated overcame the apartheid state and swelled the ranks of the democratic movement, ANC and uMkhonto weSizwe. And amongst us are those who were the “Young Lions” of the 1970s and 1980s who contributed to a resounding ANC elections victory in 1994.

However, we recognise that the journey towards the full emancipation of our people is not done yet and thus we recommit ourselves to continue to serve the people and actively participate in the work of the ANC to ensure our beloved organisation is able to renew itself to deliver on our historic mission;

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B. On the National Democratic Revolution and South African Constitution

The ANC is a national liberation movement formed to unite people and spearhead the struggle for fundamental political, social and economic transformation. We believe that the ANC was the principal architect of our transformative constitutional democracy. South Africa achieved a decisive democratic breakthrough in the 1994 elections which gave us a firm mandate to the Constitutional Assembly, made up of representatives, elected based on one person, one vote, to draft a new democratic Constitution in 1996. The democratic Constitution provides a basis for the democratisation and transformation of our country.

However, the challenge to transform and grow the economy so that it creates jobs and empowers our people, particularly the youth, women and people who live in informal settlements, townships and rural areas, remains. Further, there is today rampant crime and corruption which is a threat to our democracy.

Therefore we as the veterans commit to:

- Developing and deepening this democracy into a truly people-oriented, people-centred participatory democracy able to deliver a better life for all;
- Institutionalizing integrity and ethical leadership across the state and pursuing it in society;
- Acting in a decisive, empathetic and principled manner to generate hope for a more inclusive, just, equitable and sustainable future for our country and the people;
- Continuing the efforts to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights and
- Unleashing the potential of each person.

C. On the Economy

It is tragic that almost thirty years after our democracy, we are faced with such high levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment, especially among young people. We have yet to achieve the transformation of the socioeconomic system which is bedevilled by the legacy of the past and the reality that we function in a global economy where the economic burden falls on the shoulders of the poor and marginalized. We recognise the role that load shedding is holding back economic growth.

We have direct experience of the effects of unemployment, hunger and crime which is visited upon our children, grandchildren, the infirm and the aged. We recognise that it is women, especially young women who bear the brunt of inequality, poverty and unemployment. If do not resolve these challenges, our economy will continue to limp

Therefore we as veterans commit to:

- Assist the ANC to tackle chronic poor economic performance and the resultant high rate of unemployment, poverty and inequality; rising lawlessness, criminality and violence;
- Engage on the economic policies and the role of the developmental state;
- Work practically for economic development at a local level to ensure “a better life for all” becomes a reality in our lifetime.

D. On the way forward for the ANC

We unreservedly support the calls at the 54th ANC National Conference to embark on a process of renewal. The Veterans League is fully committed to supporting the path of renewal of the ANC and building and supporting our organisation so that it can deliver to the people.

We believe that a strong ANC, a strong organization is an asset to the government and that a strong organization rooted in our communities can complement the work of government as such an organization, once rooted amongst the people will be the first to see the problems that affect the people;

We want to see:

- A disciplined and coherent organization of members that respect themselves and respect the ethos of their organization and its traditions; and
- An organisation free from corruption, factionalism and political violence;

We, therefore, commit to:

- Offer our timeless wisdom and counsel to play vital roles on various platforms including the structures of the ANC;

- Be a “resource for the organisation” especially in terms of cadre development and political education;
- Share advice and guidance as well as policy interventions that can strengthen the work of the ANC, where necessary.
- Build dynamic ANC branches that engage with communities, and become active in ward committees;
- Assist in refocusing branches towards the people we serve and the problems and challenges they face in their daily lives;
- Monitor provision of local services to prevent corruption and poor service delivery and strengthen advice offices and contact centres for residents to access government services;
- Act decisively against corruption where ever it appears; and
- Engagement and dialogue with broader structures of the movement and civil society.

C. Our Clarion Call to Fellow Veterans

We have met here today with a sense of purpose and urgency. We are well on our way to fulfilling our historical mission and what our Constitution requires of us that we embody the organisational experience and memory of the movement and the people’s struggle for freedom and democracy, reinforcing the traditions, history, values and unity of the movement.

In light of the challenges faced by the ANC which threaten its very existence and its soul, the Conference has issued a “CALL-UP” of ALL Veterans to report at the nearest office of the ANC or online to come and make a full and rich contribution to the work of the ANC, the movement and the life of the nation.

Ends

Issued by the ANC Veterans League

For media enquiries contact

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