



**ANC Veterans League
Discussion Documents
in preparation for
National General
Council structures**



INTRODUCTION

In preparation for the NGC in December 2025, the ANC has circulated an NGB Base Document which analyses the current conjuncture and makes proposals on what is to be done.

The ANC Veterans League has circulated this NGC Base Document and held a webinar on 26 October 2025, attended by about 300 comrades.

Attached, as Annexure A is a report of the webinar, which can also be found here. Short videos of the inputs made by the following facilitators can be found here:

- Cde Mandla Nkomfe on the current conjuncture
- Cde Mike Sutcliffe on the motive forces
- Cde Maggie Govender on the national question.

The NEC of the Veterans League is meeting at the end of November 2025 to discuss their inputs to the NGC. Veterans League structures are encouraged to consider the report of the webinar and the following attached discussion documents approved by the ANC VL NWC which respond to the many issues raised in the webinar:

- Cadre Development and Modernisation of the ANC
- Ethical leadership and election of ANC leaders and public.

Veterans League members and structures should send comments by 21 November 2025 to ancvlmembership@gmail.com. Provincial secretaries should encourage discussion in branch meetings and collate comments.

Comradely yours,

Cde Ilva Mackay-Langa

Secretary General: ANC Veterans League



Background

In the Introduction to the Report of the 3rd National Conference of the ANC Veterans' League (VL), "Unity, Renewing and Rebuilding the ANC and Restoration of Public Confidence, the VL Secretary General states:

"The erosion of public confidence in the ANC is a challenge that demands our unwavering attention and immediate action. This loss of trust has been a painful reminder that our struggle does not end with the attainment of political power, but rather it continues through our commitment to service delivery, good governance, transparency, and accountability. As veterans who have borne witness to the sacrifices made by countless comrades, we take this responsibility to heart.

This discussion document focuses on how to improve the functioning of the ANC, especially at the branch level and regarding membership. The proposals made seek to strengthen the renewal of the ANC.

It is proposed that once agreed by the NEC of the VL, these matters be discussed at the NGC with a view to the development of options and considerations at the National Conference in 2027.

Problem statement

The observations of the VL on the state of organisation, as a root cause of the dismal performance of the ANC in the provincial and local government were:

- a. Political consciousness and organisational work in branches is an exception rather than a rule
- b. Collapsed, dysfunctional, weak and factionalised structures of the ANC, together with financial resource constraints, resulted in, at worst, a complete absence of strategy and establishment of a functional elections machinery. At best, the poor state of organisation meant that the campaign did not have the ability to mobilise and organise volunteers at a level necessary to win the confidence of voters.
- c. Numerous reports and conference resolutions on the state of organisation have not been implemented and the much needed amendments to the Constitution did not materialise at the 55th National Conference.



Proposals

1. Amendments to the ANC membership oath

The aims and objectives of the ANC, the ANC membership oath, the rights and duties of members envisage a politically conscious and active membership.

It is proposed that the membership oath be amended to include undertakings of:

- a. Exemplary personal conduct, honesty and integrity
- b. Participation in continuous political education programmes
- c. Adherence to the Constitution

2. Rights and responsibilities of ANC members

It is also proposed that the rights and duties of members for a renewed organisation include commitments to:

- a. Compliance with updated criteria for membership, including the requirements set out in the membership oath, at the time of joining and each renewal, and acceptance that membership will be revoked in the event of any false declaration
- b. Participation in a compulsory political education programme within 6 months of applying for membership failing which membership will not be granted
- c. Participation in an ANC branch meeting at least annually failing which membership will automatically be revoked
- d. A lifestyle audit annually if elected to a leadership position at any level
- e. Complying with all consequence management processes
- f. Complying with any decision of the Integrity Commission on unethical or immoral conduct, including a requirement to step aside

In order to embed a culture of activism in the communities in which members live, in the workplace and in areas of social involvement, introduction of a requirement for every member when joining the ANC and annually thereafter, to report verbally or in writing setting out:

- a. Reasons for ANC membership
- b. Participation in ANC programmes
- c. Involvement in the community, workplace and civil society

3. Activist branches and forums

To ensure an organisational form fit for purpose for a modernized ANC, to carry out the political and organisational programme of the ANC to “Advance the Freedom Charter” alternatives to the current organisation form, which has not significantly changed or kept pace with changes in objective circumstances post democracy, are proposed for discussion and debate.



These are:

- a. Compulsory membership of a **ward-based or voting district based branch** focusing on community issues in the geographic area of the branch
- b. Optional membership of a **defined Sectoral Forum** focusing on policy
- c. Optional membership of a **common interest forum** to enhance participation

In all cases the branches and forums would meet less frequently, at least quarterly, with a reduced quorum for any meeting that is not a nomination or an elective meeting. This would allow members to actively participate as activists in their communities, workplaces and civil society organisations, providing leadership and building confidence of the public in the ANC.

a) Compulsory membership of an activist, community based branch, the basic structure of the organisation

ANC branches are currently established in every ward and among other roles the branch is involved in the process of nominating a candidate for ward councillor. There is provision for branches to divide into smaller sub-branches or units as a co-ordinating or administrative tool with no decision-making powers.

There are pros and cons to establishing branches at voting district (VD) level rather than ward level. In the event that VD branches are established or recognised at VD level, a mechanism would be required for all VDs in a ward to participate in the selection of a ward councillor without creating competition, divisions and factionalism between VD branches.

Irrespective, in order to better facilitate the organizational and political work of a branch, community-based ward branches should be required to organize at VD level and establish committees responding to community issues such as access to health services, education, housing, etc.

The primary roles of the community-based branch would be:

- a) Election of a BEC
- b) Development of a Programme of Action for the branch
 - To address community issues, including establishment of sub-branches and units appropriate for the political and organisation work of the branch
 - Including a plan for participation in community organisations and engagement with ANC supporters and residents on issues affecting the community
- c) Receiving verbal or written reports from members annually
- d) Nomination of a ward councillor
- e) Nomination of ANC leadership and public representative at all levels



Noting that the communication environment has changed significantly over the last 30 years and that the political and organisational aims and objectives of the ANC are likely to be better achieved through visible activism and service within the community, it is proposed that:

- a) BEC to meet at least monthly and communicate with membership between BGM meetings
- b) BGM to meet at least quarterly with a reduced quorum
 - Quorum of 25% for ordinary meetings
 - Quorum of 50% for nomination and elective meetings
- c) Membership to be revoked if a member does not attend at least one branch meeting per annum

b) Optional membership of Sectoral Forums contributing to policy formation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation

There is currently no formal provision for lower-level organisational structures, other than committees of the NEC and PECs to contribute to policy formation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This has the dual effect that the ANC does not take advantage of the knowledge base of its membership and that membership with a contribution to make in particular sectors have no mechanism to formally contribute.

The establishment of Sectoral Forums with rights and duties is proposed, in sectors defined by the ANC NEC and linked to the relevant ANC NEC Committee - Health, Education, Economic Transformation, Social Transformation, Arts and Culture, Science and Technology, Legislature and Governance, and any other defined sector. The forum would not have the rights and duties of an ANC branch.

The primary roles of the Sectoral Forum would be:

- a) Election of a Sectoral Forum Executive Committee
- b) Development of a Programme of Action for the Sectoral Forum
 - To address policy, implementation and monitoring and evaluation issues relevant to the sector
 - Including a plan for engagement with ANC supporters and role players in the relevant sector
- c) Nomination of a limited number of candidates from the relevant sector only, as determined by the Electoral Committee, for the PEC and NEC, and as public representatives
- d) One delegate per sectoral forum to attend Provincial General Councils and Provincial Conferences for purposes of reporting back on any relevant policy issues
- e) Participate in a national consultative conference for the sector convened by the responsible NEC committee at least 6 months prior to the National General Council and 6 months prior to the National Conference to shape ANC policy for the relevant sector, with representation proportional to the membership of each relevant Sectoral Forum



The establishment of a Sectoral Forum would require:

- a) Application to the PEC for recognition subject to a minimum of 100 members from the relevant profession and corresponding to the boundaries of an ANC Province, Region or Sub-region/Zone
- b) Sectoral Executive Committee to meet at least monthly and communicate with membership between Sectoral Forum meetings
- c) Sectoral Forum General Meeting to meet at least quarterly
 - Quorum of 25% for ordinary meetings
 - Quorum of 50% for nomination and elective meetings
- d) Membership to be revoked if a member does not attend at least one Sectoral Forum meeting per annum

c) Optional membership of Common Interest Forums to enhance participation

The establishment of Common Interest Forums with rights and duties is proposed, in order to enhance participation in the political and organisation programmes of the ANC. This would allow members to come together based on convenience, for example due to a remote workplace or enrolment in an education institution; or common interest for example social interests, faith based groups or sporting interests.

A Common Interest Forum would be recognised only to enhance participation in ANC political and organisation interests and have no right to nominate ANC leaders or public representatives as the opportunity to do this would be in the ANC Branch

The primary roles of the Common Interest Form Sectoral Forum would be:

- a) Election of a Common Interest Sectoral Forum Executive Committee
- b) Development of a Programme of Action for the Common Interest Forum
- c) To address issues relevant to the area of common interest
 - Including a plan for engagement with ANC supporters and role players around the area of common interest
 - One delegate per Common Interest Forum to attend Regional and Provincial General Councils only for purposes of keeping the Common Interest Forum informed and guiding its Programme of Action
- d) The establishment of a Common Interest Forum would require:
 - Application to the PEC for recognition subject to a minimum of 100 members and corresponding to the boundaries of an ANC Province, Region or Sub-region/Zone
 - Common Interest Executive Committee to meet at least monthly and communicate with membership between Common Interest Forum meetings
 - Common Interest Forum General Meeting to meet at least quarterly
 - Quorum of 25% for ordinary meetings
 - Quorum of 50% for nomination and elective meetings
 - Membership to be revoked if a member does not attend at least one Common Interest Forum meeting per annum



Sub-regions, regions and provinces

The composition of Provinces, Regions and Sub-regions / Zones of the ANC corresponds to the structures of Provincial and Local Government. The appropriateness of the configuration of Provincial and Local Government has been a subject of numerous reports and proposals of 2 spheres of government only or reduction in the number of Provinces have been made.



ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND ELECTION OF ANC LEADERS AND PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

Discussion document in preparation for the NGC

Introduction

This discussion document focuses on how to improve ethical leadership in the ANC with proposals around the election of ANC leaders and public representatives. The proposals made seek to strengthen the renewal of the ANC.

It is proposed that once agreed by the NEC of the VL, these matters be discussed at the NGC with a view to the development of options and considerations at the National Conference in 2027.

ELECTION OF ANC LEADERS AT ALL LEVELS

1. Voting systems

Problem statement

- a) The current system of branch delegates electing ANC leaders at conferences is being corrupted by delegates changing the mandate they have from their branch. This can be either by being the delegate being bought or by being pressured by Regional or Provincial leadership or factions.
- b) The BGMs to elect branch delegates often wait for hours before they quorate thus causing many members to leave after signing the register.
- c) Members whose branches are not in good standing are excluded from the election process as they cannot elect delegates to the Conference.
- d) Conferences focus on elections and not on reviewing the performance of the ANC and of ANC run administrations or on policy debates and decisions.

Possible solutions

It is proposed to introduce a one member one vote system where each member can cast a vote for the leadership to be elected. Members vote in their branch or VD on a specified day during specified hours. They do not have to wait for a quorum and can still vote even if the branch is not in good standing. Voting is by secret ballot either in a ballot box (with envelopes like a Special Vote) or a system that cannot be hacked can be put in place.

This system is followed by the Workers Party in Brazil and the Movement of Popular Participation in Uruguay where leadership is directly elected by members who vote in person at voting stations and by the UK Labour Party who vote online for their Party Leader and Deputy Leader.



To limit the buying of individual members or paying for members to join as voting fodder, qualifications for eligibility to vote, such as attending a minimum number of Branch meetings and attending political education courses can be instituted.

National, Provincial and Regional Conferences should take place independently of election of leadership and focus on reports, evaluation of implementation of resolutions from the last conference, policy and new resolutions.

2) Inappropriate candidates' selection

Problem statement

Inappropriate candidates are voted into leadership positions as inadequate vetting has taken place.

- a) ANC members do not know much about the candidates as to who they really are and what they stand for. They vote for someone often because of who is supporting them and for incorrect perceptions of the candidate.

Possible solutions

- a) A more rigorous process of vetting of candidates must be introduced.
- b) This could include vetting by the Integrity Committee or comrades delegated by them, to interview candidates for their political understanding and ANC moral standing.
- c) Vetting for criminal offences and vetting in the media or online platforms for negative reports or references must also be conducted.
- d) Nominations for candidates must be made public so that members and the public can raise objections and concerns about candidates who are not suitable.
- e) The nomination process must set out requirements to meet the requirements for reflecting the non-racial character of the ANC and for inclusion of women and youth.
- f) Candidates must provide a police clearance certificate and a CV and photograph which members can access. The CV can also be used for vetting.
- g) Candidates must provide a statement setting out why they are standing for a
- h) position and what they promise to do for the ANC if elected to that position.
- i) The ANC should organise debates between candidates either physically or on virtual platforms to enable members to know the differences between the candidates better. (This is done by the Workers Party in Brazil)



3. Campaigning for positions

Problem statement

Campaigning by candidates for positions in the ANC takes up a lot of time and disrupts other political work of the ANC. Campaigns are expensive and candidates either have to be rich enough to stand or must fundraise from sources that put them in debt financially and otherwise, once elected.

Possible solutions

- a) A shorter campaign period can be introduced during which candidates are allowed to campaign,
- b) Campaign funding and spending must be disclosed and tightly monitored to ensure that all funding and the correct source of that funding is disclosed. The same would apply to spending on the campaign.

4. Conducting of election processes

Problem statement

ANC officials conducting the election process are sometimes biased and allow corruption to take place or the manipulation of voting and processes.

Possible Solution

Appoint an Independent Electoral Body to run and oversee the elections and processes. The extent to which the IEB does the work itself or is limited to checking on the integrity of the process will depend on the amount of funds available.

SELECTION OF ANC CANDIDATES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE

1. Inappropriate selection of candidates

Problem statement

- a) The selection of ANC candidates for public office positions often results in comrades who are not the best candidates being selected.
- b) Candidates with criminal records or with corruption or GBV allegations may be selected.
- c) Candidates with insufficient skills or experience to perform in the position, can also be selected.
- d) Candidates may be selected mainly on the basis that they will not challenge the appointment of corrupt or inappropriate officials if elected to office.

Possible Solutions

- a) The process and the requirements for the selection of ANC Candidates is not provided for in the ANC Constitution. The detail of the processes and requirement needs to be detailed and is probably best left to being decided by the NEC.
- b) However broad principles for the selection/election process and the requirement of eligibility is something that can be put in the constitution.
- c) Broad principles could be included such as:
 - Minimum education requirements (like a matric)
 - Requirements of independent scrutinising and vetting
 - A public objection process to candidates
 - The need for members to know who the candidate they are voting for is and what they stand for.