



Tribute to

Comrade Thuli Ndaba



To the family of our beloved Sister Thuli Ndaba—the Ndaba, Mchunu, and Tshabalala families—and to all gathered here in mourning and in celebration of a remarkable life. As veterans of the ANC, we are deeply honoured to be afforded this moment to reflect on the life of Comrade Thuli and her family. Her story is not just a family’s story; it is a chapter in our collective history.

I first met Cde Thuli in 1974. She had come to visit her late husband, Cde Bra Peter Maqabane, who had left our country in the early 60s to answer the call of the movement in Lusaka. Bra Peter was in Gaborone on a critical mission: to re-establish the underground connections severed when he went into exile.

After a week with myself and Cde Isaac Makopo, this steadfast revolutionary made a simple, human request: to see his beloved wife, Thuli, who was still back home in South Africa. In those days, remember comrades, we had no phones to call with. We relied on trusted ANC couriers, moving in silence and shadow. Through these channels, arrangements were made.

Cde Thuli came to Botswana. She then returned, at great risk, to fetch their three daughters. The entire family was reunited in exile. Later, the children were sent to Cuba to further their studies—a testament to the movement’s care and the family’s total commitment. Thuli herself would finally leave our beloved country in 1978 to join Bra Peter in Zambia.

Based in Zambia, Cde Thuli answered her own call. She underwent training and was deployed to the ANC’s Ordinance Unit. From there, she travelled clandestinely across our continent—using different passports, moving from Zambia to Lesotho, Mozambique, and Tanzania. Hers was the work of a silent soldier: essential, dangerous, and sworn to secrecy. She was, and remains, one of the true unsung heroines of our struggle.

The family’s long journey home ended in 1993, as the negotiations unfolded and our leaders walked out of prison. And still, Cde Thuli served, working for the ANC until her well-earned retirement in 2012.

Comrades, friends, we say to Cde Thuli today: ****Lala ngoxolo.**** You have run your race. You accomplished the ANC’s historic mission of helping to build a non-racial, democratic South Africa.

But we who remain must be honest: the race is not yet over. We must now take up the baton for a new struggle. The organization to which Cde Thuli dedicated her life, for which she worked without thought of remuneration, now faces an existential crisis.

We see it in the 2024 election results. We feel it as we approach the 2026 local elections



on the back foot. We know why our people are turning away: from a failure to deliver services, from a painful reluctance to act against those implicated in corruption—from the Zondo Commission to the ongoing Madlanga Commission. The revelations are harrowing.

Today, South Africans have a wide choice—52 parties, compared to 19 in 1994. To be the party of choice once more, we must prove we are worthy of Comrade Thuli's sacrifice.

We must be the ones who decisively deal with corruption. We must be the ones who tackle mass unemployment, who fix our water systems, our roads, and who end the scourge of gender-based violence. We must be the ones who restore faith.

Cde Thuli, being a person of quiet conviction, would demand nothing less. We, as veterans, hear that demand.

We have just returned from a National General Council where we reinforced policies for renewal. We have resolved, in principle, on one member, one vote. We have mandated that all candidates must complete a rigorous foundation course on our history, our values, and governance. There will be strict vetting: no candidate with a criminal record or guilty finding by our disciplinary committee will be eligible. Lifestyle audits will be conducted.

These are the measures we put in place to honour you, Cde Thuli. To renew the organization you loved.

As veterans, we pledge to you: we will not drop the baton. We will defend the gains of our struggle. We will fight to pass on a movement worthy of your generation's sacrifice.

****Lala ngoxolo, Cde Thuli Ndaba. Robala ka kgotso****

And please, tell Bra Peter Maqabane that we remember him for his selfless and tireless contribution."

. And we will continue the fight.

****Amandla!****

TRIBUTE TO COMRADE THULI NDABA.



Dear Sis Thuli Ndaba's family, Mchunu Family and Tshabalala family and members of this congregation.

It is an honor and appropriate for us as members of the ANCVL to be given this opportunity to reflect on the life of Cde Thuli and his family.

I met Cde Thuli in 1974 when she came to visit her late husband Cde Bra Peter Maqabane who left the country in the early 60's to join the ANC in Lusaka.

Bra Peter came to Botswana in Gaborone on a mission to re-establish his underground connections with Cdes he knew and last met when he left the country.

After a week being with myself and Cde Isaac Makopo he humbly requested to see his beloved wife Cde Thuli who was still in RSA.

Arrangements were made for Cde Thuli to visit Botswana and she went back to fetch their three daughters.

Remember Cdes and mourners we were not allowed to use phones in Botswana but had to rely on ANC trusted couriers to carry messages for us.

The whole family came to Botswana and the children were later sent to Cuba to further their studies and Cde Thuli only left our beloved country in 1978 to join her husband in Zambia.

Cde Thuli and her husband were based in Zambia. She later went for training and was deployed in the Ordinance Unit of the ANC. She travelled clandestinely using different passports from Zambia to Lesotho, Mozambique and Tanzania.

The family was later repatriated to RSA in 1993 during the negotiations with the racist apartheid regime and after the ANC and all other political parties were unbanned and our leaders were released from prisons.

She later worked for the ANC until her retirement in 2012.

Cdes and friends Cde Thuli is one of the unsung heroes of the ANC. She was sworn to secrecy and would never divulge the dangerous but compelling work she did during her travels to South Africa's neighboring countries.

Cde Thuli as ANC veterans we are saying Lala Ngo Xolo you have run the race and accomplished the ANC's mission of building a non-racial democratic South Africa. But Cdes and mourners it's not yet over we have to take the baton and finish the race. We have to encourage our communities, friends and neighbors to be active citizens like Cde Thuli.



We have got our our hands, worked tirelessly and actively without remuneration and participated in the establishment of a constitutional democracy in our country. Cde Thuli your organization that you selflessly work hard for without any remuneration is facing an existentially crisis.

In 2026 we are going for Local government elections on a back foot and having lost the national elections in 2024 and got only 40% of the votes.

We know why South Africans stayed away. They declined to vote for a party that has failed to provide quality services to communities, a party that has not taken action against those who were found wanting by the Zondo Commission. We now have the Madlanga Commission and the Adhock Committee investigating allegations of police corruption.

What is being ventilated in the two commissions is harrowing. Hence we say we that we are facing an existential crisis and if we do not renew we will perish.

Cde Thuli being a quiet person with strong convictions about defending our constitutional democracy, you would have been an active member of the ANC Branch and of the ANCVL.

There are 52 registered political parties for the coming local government elections compared to nineteen that had registered in the first general elections in 1994.

South Africans under our constitution democracy has a wide choice to choose a party that will deliver on their set objectives.

For us to be relevant and be a party of choice we have to convince society that we are dealing with individuals who are found wanting and those who have put their hands in the cookie jar.

We have to deal with mass unemployment, immigration issues, water and sanitation, potholes in our streets, security in our communities and Gender based violence.

Cde Thuli we just came back from the National General Council and have reinforced policies that will make us to be a party of choice.

The NGC has in principle agreed that we adopt a one member one vote during the coming elections.

All members of the ANC and prospective Councilors have registered with the iEC must have completed the Foundation Course; The History of the ANC, building an organisation, understanding Government and local Economic Development and sustainable development.

ANC candidates must have no criminal records, and no candidate shall be eligible for nomination if he has been found guilty by the ANC disciplinary Committee. All candidates



must agree to vetting and criminal records and qualifications. Lifestyle must be conducted to all prospective candidates.

Cde Thuli with these measures that we have currently put in place we believe that we will renew your organization.

As Veterans of the movement, we will not disappoint you and will ensure that we pass the baton to the coming generation.

Lala ngoxolo Cde Thuli Ndaba

Robala Ka kgatso please inform Cde Bra Peter Maqabane that we will defend the gains of our organization.

Amandla.