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29 March 2023.

Comrade Paul Mashatile,
ANC Deputy President,
Chief Albert Luthuli House.
Johannesburg.

Dear Comrade Deputy President,

Re: National Assembly Votes et al.

I address this specific letter to you recalling the position taken by Comrade President Ramaphosa late last year when he requested to be excused from meetings of the ANC NWC and NEC when they discussed the Phala Phala matter.

You therefore understand that Phala Phala is one of the matters I will discuss in this communication.

Matters at issue

To put the matter directly, I have been very disturbed by the votes we have cast in the National Assembly on:

- 13 December 2022, concerning a Parliamentary Panel Report on the Phala Phala matter;
- 22 March 2023, concerning a Motion on the Phala Phala matter; and,
- 23 March 2023, concerning a Motion on Eskom.

In this regard I want to draw attention to two strategically important matters, these being:

- the relationship between the ANC and the masses of our people; and,
- the role of the ANC as the principal defender of the gains of the National Democratic Revolution, including the Constitution (1996).

The corruption challenge

You will recall the vitally important *Open Letter* Comrade President Ramaphosa wrote to all of us as ANC Members in August 2020. In that Letter, among others, he said:

"I write this letter to you, my fellow ANC member, as our movement and our country face one of the greatest challenges since the advent of democracy..."

"As the inheritors of the legacy of Luthuli, Tambo and Mandela, we must be honest with our people and ourselves. We must acknowledge that our movement, the African National Congress, has been and remains deeply implicated in South Africa's corruption problem. We have to be sensitive to the concerns that are being raised by our people about our role as a movement in corrupt activities..."

"The ANC may not stand alone in the dock, but it does stand as accused number one."

These observations by our Comrade President are as relevant today as they were three years ago!

The Phala Phala matter

You will also recall that the Phala Phala matter broke over our heads in June 2022 when Arthur Fraser lodged his complaint against our Comrade President with the SAPS.

Since then many questions relating to this matter have been posed in the public domain. So far, nine (9) months after the Fraser complaint, none of these questions has been answered!

The recent report by SARS Commissioner Edward Kieswetter that no record of the declaration to Customs has been found of the US \$580 000 Cde President Ramaphosa says was stolen, deepens the puzzle about what exactly happened at Phala Phala farm!

In this context, consistent with what Comrade President Ramaphosa said in the Open Letter I have cited, we must be honest with ourselves and understand

that many among the masses of our people will entertain the suspicion that the Phala Phala matter includes corruption.

The Nkandla matter

In that sense this is no different from the '*Nkandla matter*' which, once again, many among our people suspected involved corrupt practice!

History had made the firm and unequivocal statement that we should never have acted as we did for a long time – to support Comrade JZ from doing what he ultimately agreed was the right thing to do, i.e. to honour the Remedial Action decided by the Public Protector.

Without doubt, the wrong positions we took with regard to the Nkandla matter, impacted negatively on the standing of the ANC with many among the masses of our people.

It is equally without doubt that any wrong position we take with regard to the Phala Phala matter will also in equal measure or more, impact negatively on the standing of the ANC with many among the masses of our people!

The Parliamentary processes

As you know, the 3-person Panel appointed by Parliament concerning the Phala Phala matter decided that the Comrade President '*had a case to answer*' with regard to a process of impeachment.

What should have followed this is that the National Assembly would have appointed a Multi-Party Committee (MPC) precisely to investigate the matter of whether the Comrade President did indeed have '*a case to answer*'!

To conclude its work, however long this took, the MPC would approach the National Assembly to recommend whether the President should be impeached or not.

HOWEVER, WE VOTED TO STOP THE FORMATION OF THE MPC WITH THE MANDATE INDICATED ABOVE.

WHY?

I WOULD PRESUME THAT AS ANC MEMBERS WE WOULD ASSUME THAT OUR PRESIDENT WOULD NOT DO AND HAS NOT DONE ANYTHING IMPEACHABLE.

THE PUZZLE IS – WHY THEN DID WE STOP AN MPC BEING FORMED WE WOULD BE CONVINCED WOULD EXACTLY ESTABLISH THAT OUR PRESIDENT HAS NOT DONE ANYTHING IMPEACHABLE?

OR ARE WE SAYING THAT WE SUSPECT OR KNOW THAT HE HAS DONE SOMETHING IMPEACHABLE AND THEREFORE DECIDED THAT WE MUST PROTECT OUR PRESIDENT AT ALL COSTS BY ENSURING THAT NO MPC IS FORMED?

IF THIS IS THE CASE, WHAT MESSAGE ARE WE COMMUNICATING TO THE MASSES OF OUR PEOPLE ABOUT THE VALUES AND INTEGRITY OF THE ANC?

The way we voted on 13 December 2022 to block the process of the formation of an MPC communicated the unequivocal statement to the masses of the people that we do not want Parliament to seek and gain a deeper and comprehensive understanding of the Phala Phala matter.

In other words, we acted as we did because there is something to hide!

The alienation of the masses

Without doubt this will have served further to alienate the masses of the people from the ANC, as it will have entrenched the view explained by our Comrade President in 2020, that – *"The ANC may not stand alone in the dock, but it does stand as accused number one."*

Any alienation of the ANC from the masses of our people directly serves the purposes of the counter revolution!

Why are we taking actions which play straight into the hands of the counter revolutionary forces?

Once more the Parliamentary processes

Earlier this month, on March 22, 2023, we voted against the formation of a Parliamentary Multi-Party Ad-Hoc Committee (PMPAC) to investigate the Phala Phala matter, consistent with the position we took on 13 December 2022.

The Mover of the Motion to establish the PMPAC, the DA, proposed that the PMPAC should be constituted as follows:

"11 voting members of the Assembly, as follows: African National Congress 6, Democratic Alliance 2, Economic Freedom Fighters 1 and other parties 2; and further consist of 14 non-voting members of the Assembly".

The question arises:

WHY DID WE OPPOSE THE FORMATION OF THE PMPAC?

I WOULD PRESUME THAT AS ANC MEMBERS WE WOULD ASSUME THAT OUR PRESIDENT WOULD NOT DO AND HAS NOT DONE ANYTHING WHICH PARLIAMENT SHOULD NOT INVESTIGATE IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCHARGE OF ITS CONSTITUTIONAL DUTIES.

THE PUZZLE IS – WHY THEN DID WE STOP A PMPAC BEING FORMED WE WOULD BE CONVINCED WOULD EXACTLY ESTABLISH THAT OUR PRESIDENT HAS NOT DONE ANYTHING WRONG.

OR ARE WE SAYING THAT WE SUSPECT OR KNOW THAT HE HAS DONE SOMETHING WRONG AND THEREFORE DECIDED THAT WE MUST PROTECT OUR PRESIDENT AT ALL COSTS BY ENSURING THAT NO PMPAC IS FORMED?

IF THIS IS THE CASE, WHAT MESSAGE ARE WE COMMUNICATING TO THE MASSES OF OUR PEOPLE ABOUT THE VALUES AND INTEGRITY OF THE ANC?

It stands to reason the action we took to block the formation of the PMPAC could not but further alienate the masses of our people and/or further entrench that alienation.

Again I reiterate:

Any alienation of the ANC from the masses of our people directly serves the purposes of the counter revolution!

Why are we taking actions which play straight into the hands of the counter revolutionary forces?

The matter of Eskom

On 23 March, 2024 we voted against the appointment of a Parliamentary Multi-Party Ad-Hoc Committee (PMPAC) to investigate various matters at Eskom, including the reported corruption, sabotage and existence of criminal cartels within the company.

Again the Mover of this Motion, the DA, proposed that the PMPAC should be constituted as follows:

"11 voting members of the Assembly, as follows: African National Congress 6, Democratic Alliance 2, Economic Freedom Fighters 1 and other parties 2; and (e) further consist of 14 non-voting members of the Assembly".

There are strong indications that behind the very serious and sustained problems at Eskom is a counter revolutionary force which has worked radically to weaken the company!

The direct hand of the counter revolution in the weakening and/or destruction of the State institutions and corporations has clearly been

exposed by the 'Nugent and Zondo Judicial Commissions' as they dealt with the matter of the attempted destruction of SARS.

Similar work must be done to establish precisely what was done and by whom to create the current Eskom crisis. It is in all likelihood quite correct that there are criminal cartels in Eskom as well as acts of sabotage and corrupt interventions all directly connected to the activities of the counter revolution!

It was very wrong that we took a decision to veto the initiation of a Parliamentary process specifically focused on investigating the criminal activities at Eskom, which would have signified the beginning of the process to unmask the counter revolution which may be responsible for the many problems at Eskom, consistent with what it tried to do at SARS.

In any case, the public would expect that our Government would act immediately to investigate serious allegations of criminality directed at weakening the SOEs, such as those made by the outgoing Eskom CEO, André de Ruyter when he said that Eskom was afflicted by serious instances of corruption, sabotage and criminal cartels.

It will have come across to this public as very strange and disturbing that when a proposal was made that Parliament should undertake such a focused investigation into the alleged criminality at Eskom, we promptly voted against an eminently correct proposal.

Thereby, inadvertently, we have conceded more time and space to the criminality at Eskom to continue with its disastrous consequences!

The alienation of the masses once more

To be honest to ourselves, as our Comrade President insisted, we must expect that the already existing gulf between the ANC and the people widened, as the latter saw the former refuse to investigate the alleged criminality which has resulted in these masses suffering from long periods of very destructive '*load shedding*'!

Once again, the question arises:

WHY DID WE VETO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS TO INVESTIGATE CRIMINALITY AT ESKOM?

We must, once more, reiterate the grave conclusions:

Any alienation of the ANC from the masses of our people directly serves the purposes of the counter revolution!

Why are we taking actions which play straight into the hands of the counter revolutionary forces?

All of us know that over the last two decades, our Movement, the ANC, has lost a lot of support.

Whereas we gained almost 70% support in the General Election in 2004, seventeen (17) years later, in the 2021 Local Government Elections, we garnered less than 50% of the vote nationally.

Currently we see that sustained loss of popular support, for instance, in the successive losses we are suffering in the Municipal by-elections in KZN!

In addition to all this, we are also aware of the fact communicate by our own polling, as reported even to the 55th National Conference, **as much as 55% of ANC supporters no longer believe what the ANC says!**

When the masses of our people finally lose confidence in the ANC as their own organisation and dependable servant leader, our Movement will perish and therefore cease to exist – exactly the outcome the counter revolution has pursued for many decades, to date.

With its demise, will also seriously fracture the National Democratic Revolution.

Mistakes we must avoid

What must we do as a matter of the greatest urgency to ensure that we do not repeat the succession of grave errors which have contributed to our continuing abandonment by the masses of our people, which errors are exemplified by:

- ✿ the mistake we made a few years ago with regard to the 'Nkandla matter';
- ✿ the mistake we made in December 2022 by blocking Parliament from exercising its oversight over the President of the Republic;
- ✿ the mistake we made in March 2023 by blocking Parliament from doing its duty to investigate the Phala Phala matter; and,
- ✿ the mistake we made again in March 2023 by blocking Parliament from investigating such destructive criminality as might be going on at Eskom.

Apart and addition to everything else, successive serious mistakes of this kind inevitably drive the masses of the people away from the ANC, leading to its death!

Only the counter revolution celebrates this outcome!

The Constitutional Court and Constitutional Democracy

On 31 March 2016, the Constitutional Court delivered its famous Judgement in the Case '*Economic Freedom Fighters v Speaker of the National Assembly and Others; Democratic Alliance v Speaker of the National Assembly and Others* [2016] ZACC 11 2'.

Among others this outstanding Judgement gave a very clear definition of what we mean by a Constitutional Democracy.

Much of what the Court said related very directly to the discussions the ANC, the Alliance and the broad democratic movement had during the preparations for engagement in the negotiations which resulted in the adoption of the Constitution in 1996.

We can find a record of these discussions and the negotiating positions adopted in the Archives of the ANC.

The Constitutional Court definition of a Constitutional Democracy emphasised the centrality of the ANC in the drafting of the 1996 Constitution and therefore the establishment of a new constitutional framework to define the new post-colonial and post-apartheid South Africa!

It is very correct that we must continue to define the Constitution as one of the historic victories of the National Democratic Revolution!

Importance of the Constitution

Its importance as a revolutionary democratic document is underlined by the sustained interventions of the counter revolution to undermine and defeat the NDR by mobilising as many people as it can to reject the *Constitutional Democracy* defined by the Constitution and replace it with a *Parliamentary Democracy*, which would mean a radical rewriting of the Constitution!

The Strategic Concept – The People Shall Govern

In the context of what we are discussing in this letter I would like to recall the vitally important provision in the *Freedom Charter* that – **The People Shall Govern!**

This is a matter of the greatest strategic importance to the very nature/being of our Movement. I will therefore spend some time discussing it.

In July 2020 we published an article entitled "A Small Matter of Synchronised Elections?" Among others the article said:

"During the years preceding the negotiations which started in 1990, many supporters of the National Party questioned us about the meaning of (the assertion – The People Shall Govern!)"

"They insisted that they understood that when we said 'the people shall govern', in fact we meant 'the ANC shall govern'!"

"Of course we explained to them, repeatedly, that the pursuit of the objective to ensure that the people shall govern was fundamental to the very nature of the ANC as a revolutionary democratic movement. It was a matter of strategic and not tactical importance."

*"Accordingly, as we entered into the CODESA and later negotiations, including the post-1994 Constitutional Assembly, the ANC constantly sought to help elaborate **a Constitution which would best enable the people to govern!**"*

Ready to Govern document & Constitutional Assembly

In the same article we discussed what that seminal document of our Movement, *Ready to Govern (R2G)*, said, particularly emphasising the need to give practical expression to the objective, that *The People Shall Govern!*

Among others the document said:

"Local government will bring government closer to the people..." and followed this by saying:

"Local government will...actively involve (the people) in decision-making and planning processes which affect them... Democratic local government means more than just having the right to vote in a local election. It also includes facilitating the creation of a strong, independent civil society, a high degree of accountability, transparency and the right to participate in decision-making processes which affect communities between elections..."

Accordingly, as we prepared to participate in the Work of the 1994-1996 Constitutional Assembly, the document the ANC prepared for Theme Committee 3, which discussed Provincial and Local Government, said:

"This (the local) is the level of government charged with the actual implementation of the RDP to ensure the transformation of society...The ANC confirms that participatory democracy and mechanisms to give effect thereto are vital to democracy in South Africa, and that civil society and its various organisations have a crucial role in democratising and transforming South Africa. The final constitution, supplemented where necessary by national legislation, should provide for the principles and appropriate/effective mechanisms of participatory democracy, as well as for organs of civil society"...

To emphasise exactly the imperative that *The People Shall Govern*, the 2006 ANC Local Government Election Manifesto said:

"Already we have put in place democratic institutions like Ward Committees and instituted participatory planning processes so that you can have a say in local social and economic development. Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) must rest on widespread consultation with the community. We are determined to strengthen popular forums to build an inclusive and truly developmental system of local government."

The People Shall Govern at the national level

But what about this important matter at the national level, that *The People Shall Govern*?

The Constitutional Court Judgement on Nkandla to which we have referred made very correct seminal observations on this important question. It said:

"The National Assembly, and by extension Parliament, is the embodiment of the centuries-old dreams and legitimate aspirations of all our people. It is the voice of all South Africans, especially the poor, the voiceless and the least remembered."

"It is the watchdog of State resources, the enforcer of fiscal discipline and cost-effectiveness for the common good of all our people."

"It also bears the responsibility to play an oversight role over the Executive and State organs and ensure that constitutional and statutory obligations are properly executed. For this reason, it fulfils a pre-eminently unique role of holding the Executive accountable for the fulfilment of the promises made to the populace through the State of the Nation Address, (etc)..."

"In sum, Parliament is the mouthpiece, the eyes and the service-delivery-ensuring machinery of the people. No doubt, it is an irreplaceable feature of good governance in South Africa."

In an April 2016 article in which I discussed 'The Wider Significance of the Judgement of the Constitutional Court on the "Nkandla matter"', I said:

"Arising from all the foregoing, it would seem obvious that:

"• all Political Parties must ensure that their Parliamentary members understand that their first responsibility as Members of Parliament, above Party loyalty, is to serve as the 'voice of all South Africans, especially the poor, the voiceless and the least remembered'".

Thus must we give concrete expression at the national level to a matter of strategic importance to our Movement – that *The People Shall Govern!*

Thus must we, the ANC – the Governing Party – fully respect, and not obstruct for partisan reasons, the Constitutional task and obligation of Parliament, "the voice of all South Africans, especially the poor, the voiceless and the least remembered" to exercise "oversight...over the Executive and State organs and ensure that constitutional and statutory obligations are properly executed."

A Parliamentary Debate & our response

In this context you will recall the exchange you had on March 23 with Ms Siviwe Gwarube, Chief Whip of the DA, when you had your maiden Q & A Session at the National Assembly.

Discussing the matter of possible Parliamentary investigation into the Phala Phala matter, she said, *inter alia*:

"Ever attempt to have Parliament conduct its Constitutional obligations have been blocked by your Party, rendering Parliament toothless because of the ANC's majority and commitment to shielding the President. VP, no one is interfering with institutions in their work. Courts have held in this very House that Parliament does not have to wait for other institution to finish their work before we act. As the Leader of Government Business, what do you say about Parliament's role in terms of investigating the President in spite of the fact that there are concurrent investigations that are taking place. What of our Constitutional obligation?"

Here was your response:

"Honourable Member, I think that's how democracy works. The majority must have its way. Democracy works that way. Maybe when you have an opportunity to govern, you'll understand. You do govern in the Western Cape... I do not know this, but I'm told that's what you do in the Western Cape. And I'm not blaming you because at some point you must take a decision against us in the Opposition when you believe your cause is correct. When the ANC believes its cause is correct, it will use its majority to push those decisions. And by the way, remember that winning positions and decisions is something you win out there during elections. So when you campaign and you win, you already win here. If you lose there, you have already lost here. It's simple. That is democracy. It works like that all over the world. And I'm happy if in the Western Cape you vote against us because we are a minority there. There's nothing I can do. Nothing wrong...you are quite right. So there's nothing wrong here as well. Let's allow the National Assembly to be able to take decisions in a democratic way. And democracy means the majority rules. That's it!"

Comrade Deputy President, I am fully conscious of the fact that you gave this response to a 'follow-up question', and was therefore off-the-cuff.

I hope that since then you have reflected on this whole exchange with the DA Chief Whip and seriously assessed your off-the-cuff comments.

I say this because it is virtually impossible to relate these comments to various long-established policy positions of the ANC!

This I must also say – that it was very embarrassing, to the point of humiliation, that a message could be communicated to the public in such a glaring manner that:

- ▶ the DA is the great champion and defender of our Constitution; whereas,
- ▶ the ANC is a determined and committed violator of that Constitution!

The matters at issue

The DA Chief Whip posed a very legitimate question, especially to the Leader of Government Business in Parliament, - what should be done about Parliament's Constitutional obligation to investigate the Head of State and Government about the Phala Phala matter, as part of its duty to exercise oversight over the Executive?

Unfortunately, this direct question was not answered!

The DA Chief Whip also asserted that Parliament should carry out its own investigations even while other State institutions were doing the same.

As you know, she was raising this because earlier you had pleaded for Parliament to wait while other State institutions, such as the Public Protector, the Hawks, the Reserve Bank and others are investigating the Phala Phala matter.

Of course there are two problems in this regard.

One of these is that Parliament has an obligatory Constitutional task to exercise oversight over the Executive and obviously cannot delegate such oversight to the very same Executive and/or its organs!

The second of these is that our country is still grappling with the serious challenge that the 'Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture' (the Zondo Commission) documented the reality that various and many State institutions and organs were seriously corrupted during and through the State Capture.

As we urge Parliament to await the outcomes of the work of possible these same institutions and organs, what evidence has Government presented to Parliament and the public at large, that these bodies have recovered from the grave damage they suffered?

In any case, what evidence does Government have in this regard?

The bland statement that any majority party in the legislatures has an unfettered democratic right to use its numbers to impose on the legislature whatever decision of its choice is very wrong!

The statement reflects what would happen if we were working within the situation of Parliamentary sovereignty which the counter revolution repeatedly argues for.

As all of us know, ours is a Constitutional Democracy. Our fundamental law, the Constitution, obliges everybody, including political parties, to operate within certain boundaries/limits.

This means that even the majority parties in our legislatures are not free to use their numbers anyhow.

For instance, no political party, including the majority party, has a legal right to block the National Assembly from exercising its oversight over the Executive!

The Constitutional Court Nkandla Judgement

The majority party may use its numbers to influence how such oversight is exercised, but has absolutely no legal power to block such oversight!

In its Judgment in the 'Nkandla case', the Constitutional Court said, among Others:

"[104] Similarly, the failure by the National Assembly to hold the President accountable by ensuring that he complies with the remedial action taken against him, is inconsistent with its obligations to scrutinise and oversee executive action and to maintain oversight of the exercise of executive powers by the President. And in particular, to give urgent attention to or intervene by facilitating his compliance with the remedial action."

It then went on to say:

"10. The resolution passed by the National Assembly absolving the President from compliance with the remedial action taken by the Public Protector in terms of section 182(1)(c) of the Constitution is inconsistent with sections

42(3), 55(2)(a) and (b) and 181(3) of the Constitution, is invalid and is set aside."

Here the majority Party had voted to absolve the President, which became the resolution of the National Assembly. The Court ruled that this was invalid as it was "*inconsistent with (the National Assembly) obligations to scrutinise and oversee executive action and to maintain oversight of the exercise of executive powers by the President.*"

The Majority Party & the Opposition

In addition, it cannot be correct to suggest that the ANC has some policy which says that its Members of Parliament must necessarily oppose anything and everything proposed by the Opposition.

The Constitution dictates that President can only be impeached on specific grounds, such as "*a serious violation of the Constitution or the law*" or "*serious misconduct*".

The Opposition may for example present to Parliament hard evidence about such '*serious violation of the Constitution or the law*' by the President, proposing the institution of impeachment processes.

The Majority Party cannot vote against this simply because it is a proposal by the Opposition. Mindful of the Constitutional obligations of Parliament, the Majority Party would have to help honour these obligations, even if it was its own President who was accused of the '*serious violation of the Constitution or the law*'!

Members' need to understand ANC policies

All the foregoing emphasises the point that our *Membership* and especially our *Leadership* must be fully schooled in the policies of the Movement as a critical part of the process of strengthening the capacity of these *Members* and *Leaders* to defend the Movement and ensure that it does not deviate from its historic mission.

This means that such important institutions as the *OR Tambo Political School* as well as such practices as visualised in the '*Eye of a Needle*' document are positioned correctly to help ensure that we produce the quality cadres we require successfully to achieve the goals of the NDR.

All this also points to the imperative that as a Movement we must always be vigilant to understand the forces which seek to defeat the NDR.

De Ruyter and Eskom

A few weeks ago the outgoing CEO of Eskom, André de Ruyter, was interviewed by the eNCA television network. Among other things he asserted that Eskom is serving as an ANC 'milk cow' and that some of our leaders are involved in and are benefitting from the criminal activity in the Company.

Quite understandably, Comrades reacted with outrage at these remarks, demanding, among others, that de Ruyter must produce the evidence to substantiate his accusations against our Movement and some of its members.

However, we seem not to have paid particular attention to the similarly important element of the de Ruyter interview – that it helped to answer the serious question – who is this man de Ruyter?

During the interview, seemingly without any prompting, de Ruyter said:

"There's a narrative that the State should control everything. Unfortunately, the ghosts of Marx and Lenin still haunt the halls of Luthuli House. People are still firmly committed to a 1980s style of ideology. They still address one another as comrade – which is frankly embarrassing. They use words like lumpen proletariat, which is ridiculous because these things were last said in the 1980s East Germany. And when such individuals talk to foreign diplomats and foreign investors...People say we haven't heard this language since the fall of the Berlin Wall – what do these people think?"

Thus did de Ruyter expose himself as the classical extreme right wing anti-communist fanatic of the apartheid years – a man driven by his ideological conviction to destroy the *anti-Christ*, the ANC!

By the time he relinquished his position as Eskom CEO, de Ruyter knew that sooner rather than later the reality would be exposed that there were criminals who were using all ways and means to loot from the Company.

Informed by his ideological outlook, he did what he could publicly to lay the blame for these misdeeds on the ANC.

This he did precisely to draw attention away from the counter revolutionary forces responsible for the Eskom crisis, thus to give them the space to continue with their destructive activities!

Now it looks very strange indeed that we could have counted on this sworn right-wing enemy of the ANC and the democratic revolution to rescue Eskom from its counter revolutionary captors!

ANC renewal

Comrade Deputy President I am greatly encouraged by your commitment to the urgent task to ensure the genuine renewal of the ANC. As you know, the

2017 54th National Conference said this renewal was "**an absolute and urgent priority**", for "**the survival of our great movement**".

Following the similar decisions of the 55th National Conference, I believe that it was very correct that the NEC declared in the 2023 January 8th Statement that one of the Movement's "**immediate priority actions**" this year would consist of "**specific initiatives and programmes to deepen the Renewal of the ANC**".

I mention this particular matter at this point to emphasise the imperative that that renewal will have to include detailed exposure of our membership to the main policies of our Movement precisely to help ensure that we have genuine cadres of the ANC, rather than mere card-carrying members!

Recent comments by our National Assembly Chief Whip about the National Constitution drew my attention precisely to the imperative to ensure such policy exposure to all our members.

As you will have seen, the relevant media report said:

"ANC chief whip Pemmy Majodina called for the amendment of the country's Constitution, saying it was initially meant for transitional purposes and that it no longer served the needs of the majority."

"This is the 25th anniversary of the Constitution, and that Constitution needs to be amended."

"Remember, this was a transitional Constitution, actually, to accommodate everyone," said Majodina.

"She said the Constitution was no longer serving the needs of the majority."

"She made the remarks during the start of the ANC parliamentary caucus' three-day lekgotla at Birchwood Hotel in Johannesburg on Friday."

[**news24** 'Constitution needs to be amended,' says ANC chief whip Pemmy Majodina: 24 March 2023.]

Obviously all these are extremely serious comments about the fundamental law of our Republic, which the ANC put firmly on our Statute Book!

Personally, I cannot guess what caused the Chief Whip to make the entirely false claims about the Constitution that:

♦ "*this was a transitional Constitution*"; and,

◆ "the Constitution was no longer serving the needs of the majority"!

Conclusion

Already six (6) years ago, the Diagnostic Report presented by the then ANC Secretary General, Comrade Gwede Mantashe, at the 2017 National Policy Conference, sounded the alert about one of the major challenges facing the Movement when it said:

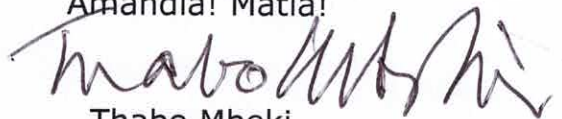
"Being in power is rapidly becoming a source of political bankruptcy, in that members of the ANC fight for deployment either as councillors, MPLs and MPs – respectively, as if there is 'no tomorrow'...It is foreign to our movement for comrades to see deployment as a source of material benefit rather than the reason to serve the people. These fights among comrades turn the interest of our people off, and push them away from the movement..."

The historic challenge remains that we must remain true to what our late President, Nkosi Albert Luthuli, said 67 years ago, in 1956, when he responded to Jordan Ngubane's political and ideological offensive against the Movement:

"The African National Congress on the basis of its Programme of Action will strive to attain the ideals enshrined in the Freedom Charter with a full sense of responsibility to the African people and their aspirations. The African National Congress will carry on the programme of African liberation and freedom for all to the best of its ability, praying as it works: "HELP US GOD. MAYIBUYE! AFRICA!"

Comrade Deputy President, I believe that both the NEC and the Movement as a whole must engage the matters raised in this humble communication.

Amandla! Matla!



Thabo Mbeki.

cc Comrade President Cyril Ramaphosa
Comrade Chairperson Gwede Mantashe
Comrade Secretary General Fikile Mbalula
Comrade Treasurer General Gwen Ramokgopa
Comrade 1st Deputy SG Nomvula Mokonyane
Comrade 2nd Deputy SG Maropene Ramokgopa