UMRABULO

Discussion Documents for ANC National Conference
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INTRODUCTION

This edition of Umrabulo, the third produced in the past few months, is meant to provide the basis for the debates leading up to December 1997 National Conference. The articles in this edition themselves emerge out of a process of much robust discussion. And this process will continue at all levels of organisation in the ANC and the democratic movement as a whole. These articles do not purport to be the final word on any of the issues covered. They are included precisely because these topics need to be discussed further in preparation for National Conference.

All branches, regions and provinces should critically discuss the issues covered in these papers as part of your political education programmes in preparation for the historic 50th National Conference of the ANC.

Each One Teach One!

Knowledge is Power!

Forward to a Vibrant and Informed 50th National Conference!

THE CHARACTER OF THE ANC

THE TERRAIN ON WHICH WE ARE OPERATING

The character of the ANC must be determined by the nature of the core tasks that confront the national democratic revolution (NDR) in our country in any specific historical time.

The democratic breakthrough of April 1994 was an important moment in our liberation struggle. Over the past three years, the ANC, as the national ruling organisation, has succeeded in opening and directing a huge process of transformation that will certainly be drawn out in character.

Even with the 1994 democratic breakthrough and the enormous transformation that is underway, the legacy of centuries of colonial oppression, and decades of white minority rule, continue to be the reality that defines our society.

The character of the ANC is informed by the over-riding, strategic imperative of overcoming the consequences of this legacy. In our 1994 Strategy and Tactics document, we continued to place ourselves within an ongoing struggle for national democratic transformation.

It is also the legacy of colonialism and minority rule, that defines both the key tasks and also those social forces which are most likely to be the motive forces that will drive forward the struggle for transformation.

These core, strategic considerations inform the ongoing national liberation movement character of the ANC.

BUT WHAT IS MEANT BY THE ONGOING "NATIONAL LIBERATION" CHARACTER OF THE ANC?

The continuing national liberation character of the ANC relates to what has already been noted the defining reality of our society is the continuing legacy of colonialism and white minority rule. This legacy still impacts upon every aspect of our society. It impacts upon the ways in which black people in general, and Africans in particular, are differently affected by everything, ranging from unemployment, to literacy, to life expectancy levels. The ANC focuses its energy upon mobilising around the aspirations and transformation objectives of this historically oppressed majority. We also celebrate and continue the traditions of liberation struggle we have led through this century.

The national liberation character of the ANC is the foundation of a true (as opposed to a superficial and cosmetic) non-racialism. Our rootedness among the historically oppressed, and our determination to focus on the struggle to overcome the legacy of minority rule, is not based on an ethnic or racial exclusivism. On the contrary, the ANC has always promoted non-racialism and the idea that South Africa is a home for all its peoples. Any genuine democrat and any genuine patriot in our country, white or black, should appreciate that the central democratic and nation-building tasks of our situation

relate directly to the struggle against the historical racial oppression of the majority of our people.

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE ONGOING "MOVEMENT" CHARACTER OF THE ANC?

The movement character of the ANC relates to many factors. These include:

- our commitment to a mass approach line, that is, the belief that the people of our country must be their own liberators. The tasks that confront us require the active involvement of popular forces. This movement tradition, which can be referred to as the masses in movement, is continued in our present commitment to a people-driven RDP. It is found in our attempts to develop, in the new conditions of our country, many new forms of popular activism and governance (ranging from community policing forums, to participatory local government budgeting, to work-place forums). The ANC, particularly through its branch-level structures, must attempt to be an active political force in the daily lives of our people. In brief, the ANC seeks to be more than a party of mass support, and more than an electoral machine. It also seeks to be a movement of mass participation;
- the movement character of the ANC also relates to our long established traditions of building a "broad church", an "hegemonic" organisation that does not seek to define itself in exclusivist, or narrow ideological terms. The ANC has been, and necessarily remains, home to a variety of progressive ideological currents nationalist, Africanist, socialist and of a variety of different classes and strata, all united behind a common commitment to national democratic transformation. The multi-class, multi-strata character of the ANC does not, however, mean that the ANC neglects the significance of class. The ANC is a multi-class/multi-strata movement with a bias or leaning towards the black working class and the rural and urban poor. This bias is based on our conviction that it is these social forces that make up the major motive force for ongoing transformation. This bias does not, however, mean that we give up a broader leadership role in regard to other social forces. In particular, the ANC seeks to organise and win over to the national democratic struggle, the emergent black middle and upper middle strata and capitalist strata. More broadly the ANC, from its base amongst the historically-oppressed, seeks to provide a broad leadership over the great majority of South Africans;
- our movement character also refers to the style in which, for many decades, the ANC has functioned. We have attempted to be a force for cohesion in the centre of a broad range of allied organisations, mass democratic and community based structures. We have, as the ANC, not undermined the ideological and organisational independence or autonomy of these organisations, but rather to interact with them, and fuse or combine their energies, constituencies and diverse capacities into a common national democratic purpose.

BUT HAS NOTHING CHANGED?

Does reaffirming the national liberation movement character of the ANC mean that nothing has changed over the last decades, and especially over the last three-and-a-half years? Of course not, many things have changed.

Major changes include:

The shifting class and strata realities in our society. While the overwhelming majority of poor, unemployed and marginalised people in our society are black, the last few years have seen the rapid development of a new black, upper middle-class. The gap between the richest ten percent of blacks and the majority has grown very rapidly. Many of the ANC's leading cadres have benefited directly from these new realities. The promotion of tens of thousands of formerly oppressed is a progressive development, but it does need us to be thoughtful on this issue. We must ensure that the ANC continues to represent the interests of the great majority, and not, narrowly, those of an emerging new elite. What is now needed is not a "poorer the better" moralising outlook. Rather, we must ensure that both ideologically (in the values and policies we develop) and organisationally, the new powers, wealth and privileges do not become an end in themselves, but are used in the service of the national democratic struggle. The best means for ensuring this strategic objective is keeping the movement, mass participatory character of the ANC. This is the best antidote to the danger of our organisation being transformed into a narrow, professionalised machine, enjoying support, but not empowering mass participation.

New international realities. In the midst of our own rapid, negotiated transition, the international forces were changing around us. The Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet bloc. This has introduced new dynamics, and new possibilities into our continent. We need to review and partly redefine what is meant, relative to these new realities, by the national democratic project. It is a review that must also take into account, not just a changed global balance of forces, but the historical record and lessons to be learnt from the national democratic project in other African (and Asian and Latin American) countries. Again, it is not a question of abandoning our national liberation heritage, but rather, on the basis of our historical experience, and very significant continental and international prestige, playing an active international role in the development of movement to movement, party to party solidarity for reconstruction, development, democracy and national self-determination.

The changed international landscape includes the major crisis of socialist societies in the 1989-1991 period. As the ANC we cannot just ignore this reality. While the ANC is, ideologically, a broad-church, all ANC members have a stake in ensuring that the socialists in our ranks, and the socialist formations (like the SACP and COSATU) with which we are allied, conduct an open and intelligent process of socialist renewal learning from the lessons of recent history. It is interesting to note that the relative revival in electoral politics of left and socialist forces, from India, through much of eastern Europe, to Italy and France, Mexico and Japan, in the latter part of the 1990s, has been accompanied by considerable organisational creativity. Broad fronts, green/left parties, coalitions and the inter-facing of electoral parties and progressive social movements have been important features. In many respects, our national experience of movement and alliance politics, far from being "something of the past", might have much to contribute to progressive politics of the next century.

But the most important changes with which, organisationally, the ANC must come to terms, relate to the new terrain on which we are operating. These are the challenges of

contesting elections in the context of a multi-party dispensation, and of assuming responsibility, as the ANC, for governance.

THE NEW CHALLENGES OF ELECTIONS AND GOVERNANCE

Amongst other things, these new tasks demand that there are multiple forms of participation and organisation within the ANC. Of course, long before April 1994, we had to meet this kind of challenge. The armed struggle, underground work and exile conditions required an organisation that was highly disciplined, with a clear chain of command, in which there was a network of full-time cadres in the machinery. On the other hand, those very conditions coupled with the imperatives of our people's war and mass mobilisation strategy, required a high degree of localised initiative and independence on the part of our cadres, and also a much wider range of active participation from our broader membership and support base. It also called for creative ways of working within, leading, but also learning from, a wide network of allied formations.

But do the imperatives of multi-party elections not mean, as some have argued, that we should radically change the character of the ANC? Should the ANC not become:

A centre-left election party?

In this debate, terms are often thrown about loosely. The "movement" structure of the ANC is contrasted with a "political party" structure, and so forth. We should not be dazzled by terms, or become stuck in a debate that is just semantic. However, often in this debate, assumptions are made about the "modern", "centre-left", social democratic party. It is therefore useful to consider, in general terms, the contemporary evolution of typical centre-left parties in the advanced capitalist countries since these are often held up as models.

The "modern" political party, at least in its centre-left versions, in many of the more established democracies, characteristically evolved out of the mass trade union movements in the second half of the 19th and the early part of the 20th century. The party emerged as the electoral wing of the labour movement. Initially, it was the labour movement that was better resourced. The party derived its finances and much of its cadreship from the trade unions. Its policies were often also considerably determined by the labour movement.

In time, this relationship between the labour movement and the centre-left party became less close. The party, especially where it was elected into office, developed an independent capacity and a growing independence from its social movement origins.

This independence was deepened (and was even necessitated from the perspective of electoral politics) by the changing social and class landscape of the advanced capitalist countries. This changing landscape involves the following:

- there has been a decline in the relative size of the unionised, blue-collar (largely male) working class;

- this change is fostered, in part, by the mass media, by the growth of the service and public sectors in the economy, and by new social identities. Voting habits have therefore become more complex. For related reasons, other progressive social movements have assumed prominence. They include women's, students' and youth movements, peace movements, minority rights groups, life-style movements like gay rights ecological movements, solidarity movements, etc. The relationship of these progressive movements (many of them designated as a "new left") to the established centre-left party has been quite complex;
- international economic trends towards financial globalisation have also undermined the capacity (or reduced the willingness) of centre-left parties to hold national capital to social accords. This has undermined the capacity to deliver on welfare, and thus weakened the credibility of these parties in the eyes of their former core, trade union constituency.

In the context of all of these changes, the trend has been for many of these centre-left parties to become much more narrowly focused on elections, using the professional techniques of the mass media to win, not activists, but supporters/voters. The core of the party becomes a relatively small professional group, specialising in media, image projection, polling, policy-making and fund-raising. The party leadership, when not in power, gravitates to the parliamentary caucus and shadow cabinet. When in power, it is the cabinet itself which dominates the party. The party is not really the leader of a broad movement. Social movements (the trade unions, but also the "new" social movements) interact with the party more as lobbyists and pressure groups and less as part of a single movement (for reconstruction, or transformation).

When the forces in the media here in South Africa, push the ANC to transform itself into a "normal political party", it is usually something like the above scenario that they have in mind. It is a scenario that fails to locate the ANC within the particular challenges and possibilities of our own national situation. It is also a scenario that often greatly exaggerates the state of health of "normal" political parties elsewhere in the world.

THE ANC AND ELECTIONS

The ANC has, correctly, sought to professionalise its capacity to fight and win elections. We need to constantly improve on this capacity. This requires dedicated and year-round attention to mass media messages, the projection of key leadership personalities, constant polling, and all of the techniques of modern, multi-party electioneering. However, these must complement and be woven into our movement character as opposed to supplanting it. They must be integrated into ongoing movement work, our mass programmes of action, our cadre development, and our branch work.

The ANC has to meet the challenges of contesting and winning elections. But this is not the sole, nor necessarily the most important function of the ANC's political machinery.

Above all, we must remember that:

- South Africa is not a typical, and relatively stable, advanced capitalist country, where elections are sometimes won or lost on the basis of tax policy, or percentage points in a budget deficit reduction programme. We are confronting a

huge challenge, a massive transformation effort of reconstruction, development and nation building. Multi-party elections are an important, but not the most important, political reality of our society at this time; and, fortunately,

- the ANC does not confront the same, diminishing, "natural constituency" problems that typical centre-left parties in the advanced capitalist countries encounter which is not to say that we should be complacent about always retaining our electoral support.

The South African situation has its own specifics. This does not mean that we should ignore the rich legacy of lessons and experiences that we can gain from many quarters. But it does mean that we should not be dazzled into becoming a "normal political party", because there is some universal law about this. Nor should we assume, as much as the media constantly insists, that until the ANC splits into a centre and a left, we will not have a "healthy, normal opposition". Ours is not a normal situation, and the situation will not become "normal" simply because we copy what are assumed to be the party political delineations of the advanced capitalist countries.

THE ANC, LEGISLATURES AND GOVERNMENT

Besides elections, an even more challenging area for the ANC in the post-April 1994 period has been how to relate to, and co-ordinate our efforts within the legislatures and a range of government structures (cabinet, ministries, security forces, provincial government, parastatals, local councils).

We have addressed this question in many forums, including at the ANC NEC's January 1997 lekgotla. We will not repeat in detail the many resolutions taken and suggestions made at these forums. At the core of them are the following positions:

- the constitutional structures of the ANC must assume an overall political, strategic primacy over the legislative and governmental institutions in which we are located;
- this basic position of principle should not, however, be interpreted in a mechanical way. The range of decisions and responsibilities, the policy-making capacities, and the sheer pressures on legislatures and government institutions will often far outstrip the capacity of ANC constitutional structures to make a meaningful and timeous contribution. It is, therefore, a question of overall strategic leadership that is required from the ANC, and not a detailed, hour by hour intervention. Nor should we pretend that the definition of what is routine and what is of broader policy significance is easy, or likely to be undisputed;
- to ensure the effective development and implementation of ANC policy, it is also critical to strengthen ANC caucus structures in cabinet, legislatures, and wherever appropriate;
- for the same objectives, the policy-development capacity of the ANC needs to be greatly strengthened.

For the purposes of our National Conference we also need to debate structural arrangements that can strengthen the interaction between ANC constitutional structures and governmental and legislative institutions.

There are two possibilities:

- while the ANC in both the National Cabinet and National Assembly happen to be well represented in the present NEC, this is a matter of chance. Just as there is formal representation on the NEC from the Leagues, should we not consider, for instance, having formal representation on the NEC from the ANC National Assembly caucus?
- on the other hand, but with the same principle in mind of ensuring the broad representativity of the ANC's leading structures, we could consider placing a cap (a limitation) on the number of Ministers, MECs, MPs and MPLs in the NEC. In the current ANC NEC, comrades from government and legislatures are in an overwhelming majority, to the detriment of greater representativity from the ANC organisational structures and the broader movement.

THE TRIPARTITE ALLIANCE

The character of the ANC, as we have already noted, is partly shaped by its role as the leading formation in a broader alliance and a still broader mass democratic movement.

The alliance, like the ANC itself, is in the first place, based on the objective social realities of our country. South Africa is a society in which the great majority of our people have been (and remain) the victims of sustained national oppression, but in which the majority class force is the working class. The deep interconnectedness between national and gender oppression and class exploitation remains the core objective circumstance underpinning the tripartite alliance.

The alliance is also based on the strategic union of the three component formations. The strategic assessment of the leading socialist party in our country (the SACP), and of the largest trade union federation (COSATU), is that the socialist and working class struggles cannot and must not be separated from the national democratic struggle led by the ANC. The ANC's alliance partners accept, and campaign for, a perspective of a common, national democratic struggle, requiring broad national unity of purpose in the face of the immense challenges confronting our country. Both alliance partners seek to win socialist and working class forces over to the ANC-led movement. Naturally, both parties will also seek to propagate their ideological and class perspectives within the movement. This is natural, but they must also be expected to do so in a non-sectarian and non-exclusivist manner.

We have already noted the underlying, objective social realities behind our alliance, and the broad national strategic convergence of the three alliance partners. However, an alliance also requires a clear programme of action. Such a programme is contained in the RDP. In the past three years we have not always succeeded in giving practical, programmatic and organisational expression to our strategic alliance. As a result, issues which have divided us, like government's macro-economic strategy (GEAR), have assumed a prominence that is out of proportion to the realities of our situation. The macro-economic debate is a serious debate, but ours is not a "macro-economic" alliance, and agreements or disagreements on an issue like this should not be allowed to obscure the huge process of transformation which we are working towards. Nor should it obscure the vast areas of common interest and strategic agreement amongst us. In the

coming period, the alliance needs to develop a much more concrete and shared programme of action around which we build our organisations, and our cadres.

If governance has added many new possibilities and also complexities to the tasks facing the ANC, it has also brought new challenges to the broader alliance. As members of a governing party, for instance, leading ANC cadres now find themselves playing the role of managers/employers of tens of thousands of ANC members/supporters, and also of organised COSATU affiliated public sector trade unions. The inevitable tensions in these new realities do not have to become unresolvable contradictions. Still less do these tensions have to lead to an "inevitable break in the alliance", as some of our opponents hope. On the contrary, these kinds of challenges underline the need for an effective alliance that is able to manage and negotiate sectoral perspectives and interests within the wider context of a common national democratic transformation struggle.

Our alliance is an alliance of independent, autonomous formations that have a shared interest in each others' strength and well-being. We do not expect one or another alliance partner to submerge its interests or perspectives. Debate within our formations and between them is natural and to be welcomed. We do, of course, expect such debate to be conducted in a constructive and comradely way.

But our independence as formations should not be thought of as an indifference to the realities within our respective organisations. The ANC, for its part, has a direct interest in supporting its allies and their organisational and policy-making capacity. In particular, the development of an alliance-wide cadreship and the strategic deployment of ANC cadres across the range of alliance and MDM formation is critical for the ANC itself, for the alliance and mass movement, and for the coherence of our national democratic struggle.

The leading role of the ANC in the present historical circumstance (a circumstance that is likely to remain over a long period) is based on the centrality of the national democratic tasks confronting all progressive forces in our country. It is not a "pre-ordained" role, nor is it a leadership that can simply be asserted and then bureaucratically enforced. The chairperson of an ANC branch is not, automatically and by definition, the "leader" of the alliance in a particular locality. Leadership is something that has to be built, nurtured and earned in a continuous way.

The capacity to play this leadership role is not the sole responsibility of the ANC. The SACP and COSATU have every reason to help the ANC in developing this capacity. There are situations where an ANC structure at the local level, for instance, may fail to play a unifying and leading role. It may fall to a COSATU local to take up the process of rebuilding democratic forces in that particular locality. This task should not be undertaken in the spirit of "taking over from" and "displacing" the ANC, but rather in helping to rebuild an ANC that is capable of assuming its historical role.

SUMMARY

The more than three years that have passed since the democratic breakthrough of April 1994 have confirmed that the ANC must constantly adapt and renew its character. The

character of our organisation is not some timeless reality. But these past three years have also confirmed that the ANC, in assuming new responsibilities, must do so with a sense of the relevance of our historical and organisational experience.

The ANC is a broad movement, at the heart of a complex series of alliances and mass democratic formations. It is a movement that is capable of winning elections and of governing with discipline and coherence. In this ANC we have an organisational reality that may well be an important model for progressive political organisation in the coming century.

ORGANISATIONAL DEMOCRACY AND

DISCIPLINE IN THE MOVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Events of the past few years have sparked debates about the democratic culture of the ANC. Questions are raised as to whether we have become a movement which is top-down, elitist and lacking a climate for free, open and critical debate.

Although this perspective comes mostly for people outside the ANC, increasingly cadres and structures of the movement are expressing similar perspectives. These concerns are often raised where the NEC intervenes in problems of leadership (such as the Free State, KwaZulu/Natal, the Northern Province and ANCWL Conferences), in issues of policy (such as the macro-economic strategy-GEAR), or of tactics such as the approach of the NWC on the various border disputes.

The response to such concerns from leadership points to the ANC constitution which gives the NEC powers as the highest decision making organ. In addition, it points to the fact that the ANC is not a federal organisation and that central leadership structures occupy an important position in defining policy and implementing that policy which affects each level of organisation. However, membership and structures affected by such decisions question the process through which these decisions are made.

Another area of concern in this debate about a democratic culture is the extent to which individuals who disagree with the dominant view in the movement are seen to be marginalised or victimised. This is a concern which has been raised in Parliament in particular and has also been raised in the general debates and lobbying around leadership in the movement. Furthermore, the movement has been plagued with what seems to be widespread problems of political discipline at leadership levels, particularly in the run-up to provincial conferences last year.

There is no doubt that the ANC has a proud and rich history of a democratic culture and debate within its ranks. This culture prevailed and flourished even under the difficult conditions of exile, underground and repression. However, this is a culture which is

continually changing as conditions change and as the movement adapts itself in pursuit of the National Democratic Revolution(NDR).

The purpose of this discussion document is to raise some of the major issues which define how we view the internal democracy of the ANC, and issues of dissent and discipline in the movement. It needs to be read along with all the other papers contained in this edition of Umrabulo.

DEMOCRACY AS A GOAL, PRINCIPLE AND PART OF OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH

The NDR is a process of struggle which seeks the transfer of power to the people. Within this, the central objective of the ANC is defined as the transformation of South Africa into a united democratic, non-racial and non-sexist society. This objective also defines the character of the ANC and means by which we have conducted the struggle for this objective.

The ANC constitution, as adopted in 1994, has following to say about the democratic character of the ANC as a liberation movement.

- The ANC is a non-racial and democratic liberation movement;
- The ANC is a democratic organisation whose policies are determined by the membership and whose leadership shall be accountable to the membership terms of the procedures laid down in the constitution.
- The principles of freedom of speech and free circulation of ideas and information shall operate within the ANC.

Since the negotiations, thee are very few political parties and movements who do not say that they are fighting for democracy. However, when you look at their organisational culture and structure, it is clear that the ANC is one of the few movements which actively seeks to create a democratic culture as both a goal and as part of its organisational operations. The movement itself should therefore be a learning organisation or a school of democracy for its cadres and members who lead society in building democracy.

PRINCIPLES FOR ORGANISATIONAL DEMOCRACY

There are a number of principles that the ANC adheres to in terms of organisational democracy. These are discussed below.

1. Elected Leadership

Leadership of the ANC is elected at all levels, and re-elections are held at regular intervals. No single individual must become irreplaceable. In addition, elected leadership can be recalled before the end of their term of office if they are not disciplined. Members, according to the constitution, have a right to take part in elections and be elected to any committee, structure, commission or delegation of the ANC.

2. Collective Leadership

The ANC has leadership collectives, instead of a single leader, at all levels of organisation - BECs, PECS, the NWC and the NEC. The constitution sets out the powers of each of these structures and they are expected to operate as a collective. This means that there must be continuous and ongoing consultations on matters affecting the ANC. In addition, it means that all members must take responsibility to explain and ensure the implementation of decisions taken by these collectives. Collective leadership also means that leadership skills, experience and knowledge must be shared.

3. Consultation

The structures of the ANC are set up in such a way that it allows for meetings at regular intervals. The ANC branch is the basic unit of the organisation and membership participate through monthly meetings and branch Annual General Meetings (AGMs). Furthermore, branches are represented at other structures of decision-making such as regional and Provincial Councils and Conference and, finally, at the highest decision-making body of higher structures through a system of ex-officio representation at all levels of the ANC. For example, all provinces and Leagues have representation on the NEC.

Having outlined the above provisions in our constitution for consultation , we should debate and discuss why situations occur such as the examples mentioned in the introduction of this document. It is a problem that our structures are ineffective.Our structures are not used to ensure adequate consultation by leadership and/or membership. Are therefore other demands that make it difficult for us to have ongoing consultations?

Consultation is not an end in itself. We have consultations to ensure that there is popular support in the ANC for certain decisions and policies and are able to explain them to others and to the public in general. Consultation is also part of ensuring that as a liberation movement we remain true to our calling that our people should shape their own destiny, and that the ANC is the correct vehicle through which to do this.

4. Powers of National Conference

The National Conference of the ANC is the highest decision-making body of our unitary organisation and can ratify or change any decision or policy adopted by structures at other levels. National Conference consists of mandated individuals from all constitutional structures of the movement at all levels of organisation. That is why we have discussion papers before Conference general meeting PGCs and other forums to discuss issues and to elect our delegates to Conference.

In its deliberations, Conference adopts the Strategy and Tactics and other policies which must guide the movement until the next conference. Sometimes, National Conference gives power to another structure such as the NEC or a special conference (like the Ready to Govern conference) to adopt policy. Provincial, regional and branch conference and AGMs are guided by the policies and Strategy and Tactics adopted by National Conference. The National Conference of the Leagues are also bound by the decisions of Conference.

The Strategy and Tactics document sets out the overall objectives, character and strategy of the ANC. It is a broad document that guides the movement from one Conference to another, and is often relevant for decades, depending on the objective conditions. The Conference, in this context, does not concern itself with matters of detailed tactics. For example, the creation of united South Africa is part of the strategic objective. The various border disputes and how to resolve them are matters of tactics. These tactics are decided upon by balancing the inputs from structures directly affected and the national interest, which in terms of ANC policy, is the creation of a unitary country.

Conference also decided on matters of policy, usually within the context of broad guidelines which are contained in resolutions.The constitution also allows for the creating of various structures to develop detailed policy, such as the Policy Department.In the new situation, in the context of being a majority party, questions which have confronted us over the past few years include the following:

- how do we ensure that the ANC constitutional structures always lead in the development of policy, especial matters of detailed policy?
- where we have detailed policy, how do we monitor the implementation of such policy?
- what scope do we give to different structures responsible for implementation (such as ANC constitutional structures-NEC, PEC etc. and cadres deployed in parliament and government) and to be creative in ensuring our policies are implemented?
- what are the policy decisions which need widespread consultation and what are the policy decisions which need widespread consultation and what kind of consultation are we talking about?

5. Mandates, Accountability, Reporting

In the context of the above our organisational structures should provide elected members with mandates to guide them when they represent us in various structures of the ANC and elsewhere. When we elect MPs or councillors, we should have policies and broad strategies for how we want to transform a particular sector, and the role our cadres should play and combine towards this process.

This is not say that we do not encourage individuals deployed to express their views, nor that those elected to leadership position. We expect all the members of our organisation to think for themselves, to be able to raise and debate their ideas at any time, and to be able to take initiative to further the goal of our struggle. We expect leadership to lead our movement, ensuring that we respond to challenges and that we implement our programmes. However, when there is a need to change in strategy or policy, we expect leadership and elected representatives to consult and get fresh mandated on the new direction.

In order to do the above in a way that does not undermine our capacity to be an effective government, one of the key challenges of the ANC remains building its capacity to give policy direction to its cadres deployed in different sectors, to have mechanisms

of ongoing reports and assessment and strong structures which can respond to process of consultation.

Reporting back, whether as MPs our councillors to our constituencies and constitutional structures, as elected leadership to our PECs, PGCs, BECs and general meetings, or as members who have been assigned particular tasks, is an important part of democracy. Information is a source of power, and if not shared, it can undermine the democratic process.

This raises the issue of how as an organisation we communicate with our members and structures. Often, information is confidential information then films its way into the newspapers in a distorted form. The ANC therefore needs to devise ways of keeping our members informed through organisational structures while we use media much more effectively to communicate. our message.

Another related matter which needs to be raised in the context of report back, is how we locate constituency work of MPs and MPLs in the context of the general programmes of the ANC, and how the parliamentary facilitate ongoing contact between our elected representatives and communities.

6. Criticism and Self-Criticism

We do not believe that any of our members are beyond criticism. Our movement and our strategies are also not beyond criticism. This means have regular evaluations, questions must be asked and constructive criticism encouraged. We must also have a cadreship and leadership who are humble and prepared to listen to constructive criticism. Part of being a cadre also means an ongoing process of self -criticism, evaluation, learning improving our strategies, tactics and policies as a movement.

Most of us would broadly accept the above. However, the challenge is to integrate this understanding into the work of our constitutional structures. For example, should the NEC, PECs, RECs have, at least once a year, a session built into their regular constitutional meetings to assess themselves as leadership collectives and the strengths and weaknesses of individual cadres who serve on these collectives?

7. Democratic Centralism

The ANC is a unitary and national organisation. Its operations are guided by the principles of democratic centralism which includes the following:

Decision of the majority prevail
After debate and discussion on a particular issue in the correct structures, a decision is taken which is binding on all members of the ANC. Even if an individual has motivated or voted for a different position, that individual will have a responsibility to implement and defend the decision that has been taken. This approach presents a number of difficulties. One of the central problems with this approach is the following question:

What happens when a comrade is a member of two or more organisations within the alliance and a mandate is conflicting? For example, a member of the ANC PEC is bound

by the decisions of the NEC on GEAR. However, that comrade may also serve as a member of the SACP's Central Committee where the perspective on GEAR is different. To which mandate will the comrade be bound and how are these conflicting mandates deal with in public? The alliance partners are independent and will therefore differ at some point on issues of tactics and sometimes on strategy. In such instances, it must be clear when speaking in public and internal platforms what mandate the comrades is fulfilling. When raising debates as ANC, COSATU or SACP members, comrades should do so in a manner that is not destructive to the alliance, its individual members and their organisational decisions.

It is part of our democratic culture to debate and discuss our strategies, policies and tactics in order to clarify ourselves and deepen our understanding of these issues. This includes the right to question whether decisions that have been taken are the best and most suited to current conditions. However, we must know what decisions are open to question and how these need to be raised. Guidelines on this issue may include the nature of the decision (is it broad general policy such as our position on free and compulsory education or is it a specific decision such as the decision to deploy a particular cadre to a specific position) and questioning decisions within structures.

Decisions of higher structures bind lower structures
As a unitary organisation, this principle applies. Because of this there is the provision for ex-officio representation of lower structures in all higher structures in all higher structures of the ANC. The NEC is the highest decision-making structure between national conference and therefore has the overall responsibility of ensuring that conference resolution and our Strategy and Tactics document are implemented, that the constitution is upheld, that it leads lower structures and maintains the character, discipline and unity of the ANC and that national interests are balanced with sectoral and geographical consideration and interests.

Responsibility of leadership and cadres
The nature and character of the ANC means that cadres and leaders must take their responsibilities and rights seriously. For example, leadership collectives at all levels often have to take decisions in the interest of the movement which may be unpopular. A leader who is part of such a collective has the responsibility to understand the motivations for such decision and explain it to the membership and the public in general.

This also means that leadership collectives must be in touch with popular sentiment in our structures as well as with public opinion. In this way, when decisions are taken, the movement can take along its support base and not make errors of judgement which may backfire.

Cadreship must display strength of their convictions to raise matters and problems in forums where they have the opportunity to do so, even if this may risk individual promotion. The interest of the organisation must be placed above self-interest . Leadership, on the other hand, must ensure that there is a climate that allows for the open debate and raising issues and deal with victimisation should this arise. The responsibility for the democratic character of the ANC is the responsibility of both leaders and cadres.

Our cadreship and our leadership must strive for personal attributes such as commitment, dedication, loyalty, respect for others, modesty, incorruptibility and critical, independent thinking.

The above principles enable the ANC to fulfil its role as a national movement, uniting different sectors, national groups and the country as a whole. These principles assist in achieving organisational unity, capacity and political cohesiveness which enables the ANC to lead the alliance, the mass democratic movement and society in general, as well as to be the leading party in government, the driving force for transformation and to exercise effective political and organisational leadership at all these levels.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is a weapon of struggle and transformation. It does not exist for its own sake, but to safeguard the unity of the movement, ensure that it is able to fulfil its historic mission and achieve its objectives. Discipline is a political matter.

Members voluntarily join the ANC and become cadres of the movement in order to contribute towards changing and transforming our society. As a national liberation movement, the ANC has basic principles, strategies, norms and an organisational culture and structures which set the parameters for this contribution by individual members and cadres. Part of the discipline of the ANC must therefore be to ensure that its members and cadres internalise these principles, strategies, norms and organisational culture through political education, participating in debates and being tasked with certain responsibilities.

Our constitution says the following about discipline in the movement:

- Disciplinary proceedings should not be confined to violations of the basic principles and norms of the ANC and not be used as a means of stifling debate or denying members their basic democratic rights;
- In addition to misconduct, which directly violates the norms of the ANC, any abuse of office, corruption, sexual harassment or misappropriation of funds shall give rise to proceedings.

The constitution also gives members responsibilities. These include:

- to take the necessary steps to understand and carry out the aims, policy and programmes of the ANC;
- to deepen his/her understanding of the social, cultural, political and economic problems of the country;
- to fight against racism, tribal chauvinism, sexism religious and religious and political intolerance or any other form of discrimination or chauvinism;
- to observe discipline, behave honestly and loyally carry out decision of the majority and of higher bodies.

In dealing with discipline of individual members and cadres, they must be treated as comrades, with an awareness of the various levels of personal and political

development and their various levels of responsibility. In the process, contradictions which are antagonistic and non-antagonistic are looked at.

When a member, cadre or leader contravenes the constitution or code of conduct of the ANC, procedures are put in place to deal with the issue. These procedures are based on principles of fairness and justice They include:

- availability of information as to what constitutes breach of discipline, through widespread distribution of our constitution and code of conduct to members and cadres;
- written notice to the person affected and a reasonable opportunity to make his/her defence,
- the right to have the matter reviewed by the next higher body of the ANC,
- penalties which are aimed at allowing the person to rehabilitate,
- giving the ANC the right to protect itself from infiltration and elements who seek to divide the movement and to take it away from its course as a national liberation movement.

In light of the above, we should assess the effectiveness of our code of conduct in our deliberations on it. We need to look at how we use it to deal with new situations such as a code of conduct signed by our public representatives at various levels.

CONCLUSION

The democratic culture of the ANC, and indeed its organisational and political discipline, is central to the character of the ANC. This culture of democratic and open debate allows us to come up with the most progressive policies and to allow the organisation to correct itself from within. This is what distinguishes the ANC from the political parties and movements in the country and in many parts of the world.

This democratic culture and discipline is not something that we can be complacent about. It is therefore fitting that as the ANC approaches its last National Conference before the end of the Millennium, its members, cadres and leaders take stock of this matter and reaffirm our commitment to our essential character as a movement.

CHALLENGES OF LEADERSHIP IN THE CURRENT PHASE

INTRODUCTION

One of the tasks the National Conference is charged with is the responsibility of electing a leadership collective. This is a matter that should be discussed openly within constitutional structures of the movement. Such discussions should be informed by the strategic tasks of the organisation and the challenges that it faces in the current phase.

In this process, it is natural and necessary that there should be contest among individuals and lobbying by their supporters. Our challenge is to ensure healthy and comradely competition, so that we emerge from this process united, with a leadership suited to the current phase. On the other hand, if persued in dark corners, and in a spirit of self-interested sectionalism, the process would degenerate into debilitating contests which divide the movement and divert it from the major task of social transformation. It could also be easily exploited by forces of counter-revolution.

This paper looks at the context in which leadership debates should occur and proposes criteria for the type of leadership the ANC needs in the current phase.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

The central objective of the ANC is the transformation of South Africa into a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous society. These tasks are further elaborated in the RDP and other documents. They refer to meeting people's basic needs, developing our human resources, building the economy, democratising the state and society, and building a united nation. Running like a thread through all these tasks is mass involvement.

The ANC should ensure that power in all sectors of government, in the economy and in the ideological arena, is truly in the hands of the people and that it mobilises the people to continue being their own liberators. In deploying the movements cadres we should ensure a proper balance among these various centres of power Furthermore, account has to be taken of the balance within the leadership between cadres in government and outside, as well as the class and national forces the ANC relies on to effect transformation.

While it is correct to look at the traditions of the ANC from years of struggle, we should also acknowledge the new situation within which we operate as the leading organisation in government. This has thrown up new tasks which are in many ways of a different nature. Indeed, as we alter our social environment through the act of social transformation, in the same measure we alter elements of our own character as a movement.

CHARACTER OF THE ANC AND IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

The ANC is a broad mass movement, as distinct form a narrow cadre-based party. This will thus find an expression in its membership in general as well as in the style of leadership, including how "popularity" is sought and gained.

The ANC is a. non-racial movement. In this context, the main content of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) remains the liberation of the black people in general and Africans in particular. The Strategy and Tactics document from Morogoro goes further to underline that this principle should find expression in the composition of leadership structures of the ANC. From its birth, the ANC called for unity among the African people - to bury the "demon of tribalism", and ensure that in its geographic spread and public face, the movement is seen as truly national in character.

The ANC is, in class terms, a liberation movement representing the interest of the working class, the rural poor, professionals and Black business which was by definition, small business. Because of national oppression, these forces were defined essentially along racial lines. The organisation also recognises the leading role of the working class in the NDR. By implication workers should have a central role to play in both the membership and leadership of the ANC. The new situation may require that this general definition is broadened somewhat, but the essence remains.

Over time, the ANC has embraced the principle of gender equality as one of the central features of national liberation. As with the working class, the fact of holding the view of gender equality should be reinforced with equitable representation of women at all levels of the movement. In the same way, the ANC also recognises the important role played by various other sectors of society such as youth, the educational sector, civic associations, the religious community, traditional leaders and so on.

To be national in character and be seen as such, and to ensure that the ANC is in constant touch with the people, the movement allows for *ex officio* representation of the provinces on the National Executive Committee (NEC). However, it is also critical that among the directly elected NEC members, there should be as even a provincial spread as the democratic process can allow.

LEADERSHIP BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

Individuals are shaped also by their own experiences in struggle. In the ANC, one of the positive qualities has been to unite various strands of political experience. Historically, this finds expression in the form of those who, before 1990, were "mainly" in prison, in exile, in MDM formations, in professional work and in broad patriotic front organisations. This may include some capable members who may not have been at the forefront of the struggle but have joined the ANC in the 1990s and are making an invaluable contribution in the new phase of the NDR.

It is however, a fallacy to treat these various streams as rigid and distinct categories, each walled in from others. The truth is that the majority of individuals are found in two or more of these categories. In addition, while such political background and experience

will contribute in shaping individuals' approaches to issues, the consciousness and identity that define individuals cannot be confined merely to these political experiences.

In the context of the current phase of the NDR, account also has to be taken of the capacity of individuals to play leadership role in governance. While education may not be the only factor, we have to acknowledge the reality that the current technological age requires certain general academic and specialised knowledge. And the presence of such leaders in the NEC will enhance the role of the ANC as the governing organisation. On the other hand, the profile arising from their work will make such leaders more visible than others. Therefore, care has to be taken to ensure that the advantage arising form such deployment does not result in an NEC made up mainly, or only, of those leaders in government.

Adherence to all these principals all these principals in considering candidates for leadership does not mean reductionism: in the sense of counting heads and doing "class, racial, ethnic, provincial, ministerial/parliamentary and gender arithmetic". Various leaders will at once represent various streams Further, we should discourage attempts to mobilise on narrow sectional tickets. Individuals cannot project themselves as representatives of exiles, of the MDM, ethnic groups and so on. An attempt to use these attributes as a basis for opportunistic mobilisation is divisive and misleading. Rather, emphasis should be placed on the contribution that individuals make or wish to make to the task of transformation.

Leaders should be elected on merit. In the NEC they are not sectoral representatives but part of an integrated collective. However, the emphasis on integration should not subtract from the requirement that the NEC "melting pot" represents and is seen to represent a synthesis of not one but the cross-section of various strands and identities. Overall, the ANC should strive to be the microcosm of the motive forces of transformation and in broader terms, the microcosm of the South African nation being born.

PRINCIPLES OF ANC ORGANISATION AND QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP

The challenge of ensuring balanced representation in an integrated leadership is not merely for appearance. Different strands should bring their experiences to bear on decisions taken by the leadership, to reflect the interests and aspirations of the motive forces of the NDR

This is important not only because of the NEC is the highest decision-making body between conferences, but also because the ANC is not a federal organisation. Therefore, the central leadership structures have an important position with regard to defining policy and in its implementation which affects each level of the organisation. Certainly, far-reaching decisions should, as a matter of principle go through thorough consultation. One of the organisational principles of the ANC is active participation by members in decision making. But the NEC remains the highest body between Conferences to take final and binding decisions.

Like with all social phenomena, such final decisions will not necessarily reflect the passionate views of the people directly affected precisely because national

considerations have to be taken into account. In other words, a policy decision will often reflect what Frederick Engels referred to as a "parallelogram of forces". The parallelogram of forces reflects the complex equilibrium of various forces pulling in different and sometimes opposite directions. NEC leaders are obliged to promote and defend the collective decisions that emerge from their discussions.

In broad terms, an ANC cadre and more particularly NEC members should have, among others, the following political qualities:

- An NEC member should understand ANC policy and be able to apply it under all conditions in which s/he finds him/herself . This includes an appreciation , from the NDR stand-point, of the country and the world we live in, of the balance of forces, and how continually to change this balance in favour of the motive forces of change.
- An NEC member should constantly seek to improve his/her capacity to serve the people. S/he should strive to be in touch with the people all the time, listen to their views and learn from them. S/he should be accessible and flexible and not give her/himself the status of being the source of all wisdom.
- An NEC member should win the confidence of the people in their day-to-day work. Where the situation demands, s/he should be firm, and have the courage to explain and seek to convince others of the correctness of decisions taken by constitutional structures, even if such decisions are unpopular. S/he should not seek to gain cheap popularity by avoiding difficult issues, making false promises or merely pandering to popular sentiment.
- An NEC member should be above reproach in his/her political and social conduct - as defined by our revolutionary morality - and through force of example, act as a role model to ANC members and non-members alike. Leading a life that reflects commitment to the strategic goals of the NDR includes not only being free of corrupt practices. It also means actively fighting against corruption.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

There are no ready-made leaders. Leaders evolve out of battles for social transformation. In these battles, cadres will stumble and some will fall. But the abiding quality of leadership is to learn from mistakes, to appreciate one's weaknesses and seek to correct. them.

As a bearer of social experience, an individual's personality traits play an important role when in positions of leadership. A key quality is the ability to influence and to be influenced by others in the collective without losing one's identity. Yet another is the conviction to state one's views boldly and openly within constitutional structures of the movement. In addition, without being disrespectful, an individual should not cower before those in more senior positions in pursuit of patronage, nor rely on cliques to maintain one's position.

The struggle for social transformation is complex where at times, personal interests will conflict with organisational interests. From time to time, conflict will manifest itself between and among members and leaders. The ultimate test of leadership includes:

- striving for convergence between personal interests - material, status and otherwise - and the collective interest. Yet the movement itself should strive to take personal interests into account when deploying cadres, and ensure that the willingness to sacrifice is rewarded in an appropriate manner.
- handling conflict in the course of ANC work by understanding its true origins and seeking to resolve it in the context of struggle. Whatever difficulties individuals face, attempts should be made to resolve them through constitutional structures.
- the ability to inspire people in good times and bad, to reinforce members' and society's confidence in the ANC and transformation. The authority that a leader exercises should come from genuine acceptance of the leader by the membership, not through suppression, threats, patronage or connivance in promoting defiance.

BROAD CHALLENGES OF CONFERENCE IN ELECTING THE NEW NEC

Over the pest few years the ANC has gained a wealth of experience from its work in government. This naturally has affected the character of the organisation and its leadership, with a new emphasis on building the capacity to govern and implement programmes to uplift conditions of the poor. This is an important, if not most critical, terrain in the current phase: the success or otherwise of the ANC depends on how it performs at this level.

Yet it would be a mighty error to separate this function from the tasks of building the ANC as an organisation. It is not individuals as such who are in government, but ANC members deployed to fulfill a function. The parameters within which they carry out their functions are defined by the ANC and they should account to it. Mass participation, which is so central to the success of the RDP, requires that the ANC mobilises the people to take part in transforming their own lives. It is the ANC as an organisation that should strengthen the forces which objectively stand to gain from the success of the NDR. These forces include the Tri-partite Alliance, the mass democratic formations, the broad patriotic forces and so on.

This critical element has suffered because of a lack of a deployment strategy In the period leading up to the formation of the democratic government. As the President said at the opening of the 1994 Conference:

> Ours was not a planned entry into government. Except for the highest echelons, there was no plan for the deployment of cadres. We were disorganised, and behaved in a manner that could have endangered the revolution

This has weakened the ANC's role as an organiser of the people and political centre of the broader movement for transformation.

In so far as leadership elections are concerned, Conference will need to ensure an NEC that reflects the main areas of ANC work which are government and full-time mass work. The latter entails ensuring that there are sufficient full-time NEC members in the ANC, as well as leaders from the working class and other sectors of society not deployed in government. With regard to the working class in particular, at its recent Lekgotla, the

NEC undertook to consult Cosatu about the principle of their leaders making themselves available for election to the NEC. This is besides the call for organised and unorganised workers to take active part in ANC structures and the recognition of the fact that the interests of a class are not necessarily and mechanically articulated only by members of that class. In terms of gender balance, members should deliberately identify women who are capable of and/or have the potential to assume leadership positions. And, in nominating leaders in general, the question of their commitment to gender equality should be put on the agenda.

An issue that needs thorough examinations is that of rejuvenation of the leadership in terms of electing young cadres who have done well in various fields. There are graduates of the Youth League, MK, SASCO, etc. or other young workers and professionals - young men and women who have a contribution to make at this level. This is important not only for purposes of the unique contribution the youth can and should make in the NEC, but because we should actively start building the leadership of the future in actual practice today.

It is also critical that Conference address the question of the track record required for individuals to be elected into the NEC, and similarly into other levels of leadership. For instance, we could include in the ANC constitution the condition that a member can stand for the NEC if s/he has been a member for 5 years, 3 years for the PEC, 2 years for the REC and 1 year for the branch. This will help ensure that people demonstrate a consistent track record in ANC work before serious responsibilities are thrust on them.

The movement's cadre policy should include a deliberate process of "career-pathing", where areas in which cadres can make a decisive contribution are identified and they are deployed in such a way that their future career is broadly mapped out. Through such deployment and multi-purpose training, cadres should be able to advance from the lowest to the highest levels within the movement and in other sectors of society. This should include systematic political training of cadres and leaders alike in the form of the various courses, workshops and "schools" that are part of the movement's programme.

BROAD CHALLENGES OF CONFERENCE IN ELECTING OFFICIALS

The criteria applying to the NEC as a whole are even more relevant with regard to the officials. In addition, the NEC has made the strong proposal that the SG, Deputy SG and TG should be full-time in the ANC. The temptation in recent years has been conveniently to relax such a requirement in order to accommodate individual candidates. To continue doing this now, with the glaring weaknesses of the past three years will be irresponsible.

Another challenge is the fact that President Nelson Mandela will not be standing as President and Conference will have to find a new leader to take the baton - a personality with the qualities to continue the traditions of Dube, Makgato, Luthuli, Tambo and others. Needless to say, it is a challenge that cannot be taken lightly.

While the issue of "a single presidency" is appreciated, the question has been posed whether the ANC Deputy-President should automatically translate into Deputy-President for the country.

There are obvious disadvantages of having two Deputy-Presidents (ANC and Government):

- It my create a sense of power and fiction between them. This will undermine an integrated approach to both governments and the ANC, and perpetuate the false notion of "two ANC's",
- Both the President and Deputy President should get/receive mandates from the ANC Conference to ensure that the movement as a whole participate in determining who the country's Deputy-President should be.
- While it is critical that the SC and other officials are full-time in the ANC, one of the most critical tasks in the current phase is to use the main lever of change - the state -to good effect, and the presence of both the President and the Deputy-President of the ANC in government will help ensure this.

However, the following advantages of having 2 Deputy- Presidents (one in ANC and one in government) need to be considered

- This will allow the new President, in consultation with the NEC/NWC, the time and space to select the country's Deputy-President taking into account the needs of government, whereas the ANC's organisational needs may dictate election based on entirely different criteria.
- It may undermine broader cadre policy to seek to elect a Deputy-President for both the ANC and the country in preparation for succession beyond 2009 - if the next President serves two full terms. Rather than cast this in stone, in the form of a "10-year guarantee heir-apparent", it should evolve naturally over the years, with a wider pool of young cadres from whom the leaders would be elected.
- The Deputy-President of the ANC does not have to be based necessarily at national government level nor even full-time in the ANC. This will allow the ANC the space to select from a wider canvass of leaders, rather than being constrained by the narrow requirements of government.

The decision of President Mandela not to stand as ANC President has also evoked questions such as the need to continue to bring his experience, strengths universal popularity and other qualities to bear on the work of the ANC. Both formally and informally, mechanisms should be found to ensure this. For example, for him to continue as a member of the ANC "Presidency".

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The experience that the movement has gained in the past 3 years has brought to the fore the question of ensuring a. commitment from candidates for any of the senior positions that they will serve their full term. When we were still new in the current terrain, and were struggling with matters of appropriate deployment, it was understandable that there would be destabilisation. But this should be avoided from the beginning at the approaching Conference. How this can be ensured is a matter that requires further discussion.

Because of the nature of the ANC as a mass organisation, members of the movement come to know about leadership mainly from media exposure. As such, good cadres in

positions that do not allow them such exposure are not given the necessary recognition when it comes to election into positions of leadership. Another upshot of this is that individuals then seek recognition by clamouring for positions that would give them such media exposure. How do we enure that the background, experience and qualities of all potential NEC candidates are brought to the attention of the membership and, particularly, Conference delegates?

Related to the above is the question of the parameters of lobbying and campaigning. What rule, should be developed to ensure healthy and comradely contest, rather than campaigns of denigration or hero worshipping of individuals? To what extent should the media be used in this regard - if at all,

A proper understanding of' "full-time ANC work" should be developed. This could mean working on a daily basis at ANC HQ, or holding the position of a member of a legislature, but with the necessary space to work most of the time at HQ. The advantages of the former are obvious. With the latter, it will ensure that the leader/official concerned is in touch with the parliamentary caucus and governmental business

CONCLUSION

These issues are meant to generate open and robust discussion within our ranks. In these discussions, we cannot avoid, against the backdrop of the current phase of the NDR to call for maximum vigilance. It is only natural that forces of counter-revolution will seek to influence the process, try to use it to divide the movement, and even manoeuvre to place their own candidates at the highest possible levels.

While the machinations of the counter revolutionary enemy should be kept in mind, the fact of their existence should not be used to stifle debate. In the final analysis, the right to elect the national leadership resides nowhere else but with the membership and their elected delegates. Democratic engagement, vigilance, ingenuity and integrity are the qualities that have characterised the ANC as a collective over the years, and they are the mainstay of its strength today.

"Leadership" does act only entail being a member of the NEC. In any case, all ANC members arc meant to be leaders of communities and sectors in which they operate. The corps of ANC leaders of branches, regions and provinces form a critical layer of the leadership of the NDR. While the NEC is the highest decision-making body in-between conferences, its success depends on other levels of leadership and the membership in general.

The Need for a Gendered Perspective from the ANC and its Cadres

The emancipation of women is not an act of charity, the result of a humanitarian or compassionate attitude. The liberation of women is a fundamental necessity for the Revolution, the guarantee of its continuity and the precondition for its victory. The main objective of the Revolution is to destroy the system of exploitation and build a new society which releases the potentialities of human beings... This is the context within which women's emancipation arises.

Comrade Samora Machel

INTRODUCTION

The strategic objective of the ANC is the transformation of our country into a united, non-racial, nonsexist and prosperous society. (ANC Strategy and Tactics, 1994)

There are many debates within the ANC to understand the concrete meaning of and develop concrete programmes to achieve the key elements that are contained in the above objective. However, when it comes to the issue of non-sexism, there is either a lack of debate, confusion and even ridicule of the meaning and ways of achieving non-sexism. There are no clear programmes to implement gender equality.

And yet, the question of gender equality, as framed within the principle of non-sexism, is central to the ANC's programme of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR). While women remain on the bottom of the rung in terms of politics, the economy and even in organisation, we will, as a nation, never achieve what we have been struggling for. As comrade O.R. Tambo put it: "South Africa will never be free as long as women are not free". In fact, many activists have acknowledged that the basis on which to judge the liberation of a country is to note the extent to which women are free. This is particularly true of South Africa where the vast majority of women have been triply oppressed. That is, they have been exploited on the basis that they are black, women and workers.

Because of the centrality and importance of gender equality in the liberation of South Africa, the ANC's National Conference will have to go beyond buzz words around gender and emerge with policies and institutional frameworks, programmes and mechanisms to promote gender equality. The ANC's commitment to gender equality will have to be reflected within the ANC itself. We have to critically look at our policies, institutions, attitudes, composition of our structures and our programmes.

This paper will look at some of the theories that underpin the ANC's understanding of gender equality, suggest some practical ideas on how to achieve this, but is mostly written as a tool to inspire debate in our structures as preparation for further discussion at Conference.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONDITIONS OF WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA: TRIPLE OPPRESSION AND THE PROGRAMME OF THE ANC

In this section we look at the distinction between sex roles and gender roles and the ways in which gender is constructed in the South African context.

1. Sex Roles and Gender Roles

In understanding triple oppression, it is first important to situate the debate within an understanding of how gender is constructed. In other words, gender is not a natural phenomenon, but is created by societies to order the roles of men and women, and it is bound up with political and economic objectives.

There is a difference between sex and gender. Sex identifies the biological make up and difference between the male and the female.

Gender is constructed socially and identifies the relationship between men and women in the context of power relations. Gender is not natural or god-given, but is created by society through socialisation using institutions such as the family, the church and religion, school and education and the state and laws. Gender relations can therefore be changed by the very society that created them.

Gender roles exist in all spheres of society starting with the division of labour in the family. For example, in the family, women are allocated the role of being child rearers and are given the duties of cleaning and cooking. In fact, women are allocated the tasks of domestic chores as if it were natural for them to have to do this. This work is hidden and not paid for. It is not registered as work within the tools that we use to analyse the working of the economy such as in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) figures. What this hidden, unpaid labour serves to do is prop up the capitalist economy. Workers can be paid less if they do not themselves have to pay for domestic work. For most women in this country, domestic chores are additional to the work that they do outside the house. This means that women have very little spare time. This is known as the "double bind".

These socially determined roles for men and women are culturally or socially created and are given the status of being natural and normal as if they "have always been" and "will always be". From these gender roles, certain characteristics are expected of men that are a reflection of what it means to be male or to be masculine while other characteristics are attributed to women as a reflection of their femininity. The notions of masculinity and femininity define how men and women must behave and how they must look. They refer to physical appearance, psychological states, sexual orientations, intellectual capability and emotional states. For example, men are supposed to be natural leaders, decision makers and providers in society beginning within the family while women are the caregivers, supporters and followers of men.

2. Gender Relations

Gender and gender roles define the way women and men behave in society and in relation to each other, the way in which they perceive themselves and their attitudes. Gender relations affect the unequal power relations in society. The essence of unequal power relations is the domination of men and the subordination of women. These gender relations shape the ideas, knowledge, values, culture, attitudes, the structure of society and, in essence, social life itself. Gender roles and the stereotypes that structure

the roles of men and women are reinforced in books, history, stories, songs and the media.

3. Patriarchy

Patriarchy is the system of male domination and control at all levels of society based on these socially constructed notions of gender, gender roles and gender relations that we have discussed above.

Not all patriarchal societies are the same and the oppression of women in various formations differs based on the economic and political differences of those societies. For example, patriarchy will manifest differently in advanced capitalist societies to traditional rural societies where economies are structured differently. Patriarchy has not always existed, and can also be dismantled. In addition, patriarchal control is linked up with the type of economy, political system and cultural objectives of particular societies.

Patriarchy is reproduced through a web of laws and private and public institutions such as the family, religious and traditional beliefs, practices and norms. It is also reproduced through ideological apparatuses such as the school, education in general and the media. Violence against women is an expression of an extreme form of reinforcing patriarchal control of women.

In South Africa, while there is the overarching system of patriarchy, different women experience different forms of male domination and oppression according to their class, status, religion, race and even ethnic and cultural backgrounds. For example, white, middle class women will experience patriarchy differently to rural African women. It is because of the understanding of the links between class, race and gender in South Africa that the notion of triple oppression emerged to describe the character of the oppression of black women. For the majority of women in South Africa, oppression emerges in terms of patriarchal control, their relation to the means of production (they are mostly poor workers or unemployed) and the fact that they are black. That is not to say that if black women become richer they will be liberated. The struggle for the emancipation of women must necessarily be linked with the dismantling of all systems that oppress them. Gender oppression is thus linked directly to our movement's project of the NDR.

In the section below, we outline some of the approaches to the challenge of achieving gender equality.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO GENDER

There are different approaches to gender depending on different understandings of inequalities and how to overcome them. These approaches are:

- a gender blind approach
- a women specific approach
- a gendered perspective.

The first two approaches are limited in their perspective and cannot adequately address the problems of gender inequality. The ANC subscribes to the third approach, a gendered perspective, which more concretely understands the context in which gender inequality exists, and has the capacity to develop programmes to dismantle gender oppression.

The gender-blind approach

In this approach, all human beings are viewed as the same and are seen to be deserving of the same treatment. In other words, society should be dictated to by universal laws and values. This approach does not question what those norms and values are, where they come from and for what purposes they have been developed. In the South African context, this approach argues that the Constitutional provision of equality for every individual is enough. This is similar to the view that says that because South Africa has achieved formal equality through law, blacks and whites are equal and there is no need to address the legacies of the past through redistribution and empowerment. This approach is typical of the liberal worldview and can be seen in the approaches to gender questions of the DP and big business.

The ANC rejects this approach since it realises that because of the historical conditions in our country, needs are not universal and past colonial legacies must be addressed. Redistribution of and access to resources and services must form part of our approach. However, the ANC, especially in some of its documents and debates reflects tendencies of gender blindness through its silence on the impact of gender relations in whatever is being discussed. For example, examine the papers in this edition of Umrabulo and find out whether or not they refer to gender and include an analysis of gender.

The women-specific approach

Women are viewed as a special category in this approach deserving special treatment in order for them to enjoy equality with men. This approach exists in different forms. There is the welfare approach and the equality of opportunity approach which have been identified.

The welfare approach sees women as an isolated category needing inputs into their bodies food, fertility interventions (such as access to birth control), etc. These needs are related to their constructed gender roles and women's inferior status in society. Women are therefore regarded as dependents for ever more. They are dependent either on their male partners, family members or the state. This approach does not look at dismantling the very systems that oppress women. If taken alone, this approach in the long run will further disempower women since it ignores their intellectual and cultural capabilities, individuality, creativity and sense of responsibility.

The equality of opportunity approach focuses on the creation of opportunities for women to enter the spheres of authority, power and control. Fairness and equity are seen only as the springboards to enter the male domain without necessarily changing the status quo in terms of power, power relations, dominant ideas and values. This approach wants women to engage in masculine activities in a masculine world. The focus of this approach tends to be on how many women are in decision-making

positions without also addressing what happens in those positions in terms of how power is defined and exercised and the relations within those positions. It is assumed in this approach that women, by virtue of their sex, are naturally gender aware or that they will automatically represent the interests of all women. Gender transformation is assumed to occur when women enter the fortresses of power.

The women specific approach is complex. It can sometimes be progressive, liberal or conservative depending on how it is used, who uses it and for what purposes. The ANC and the ANCWL in particular, have used the positive elements of this approach. Some of the positive outcomes have been the participation of women in CODESA and the entry of women into leadership structures of the ANC, parliament and government. Identifying issues that are specific to women and ensuring that more women are represented on particular structures is important, but not an end in itself. This approach must extend beyond just a numbers game or a quantitative exercise. It is not good enough, for example, for the women on these structures to be burdened with consistently raising the gender debate. All cadres in the ANC should inform the approach to gender. Furthermore, the danger in seeing numbers as the only strategic objective of gender struggles is the tendency towards opportunism in the call for gender equity. For example, the issue of representativity tends to arise in the build up to conferences or elections of any kind. Sometimes the quota system debate tends to be mechanical where individuals, rather than groups, are promoted.

The gendered perspective

This approach does not look at women and men alone, but at the relationship between them, how societies are structured along gender lines and the impact of these relations in the whole society. This approach explores the subordination of women to men and how this relationship impacts on all aspects of life and society. That relationship is not experienced in the same way everywhere. The context in which gendered relationships emerge and the constantly shifting economic, political and social terrain is always recognised. A gendered perspective is concerned with ensuring a gender analysis with regard to policies, programmes, planning strategy and evaluation. In other words, it looks at fundamentally transforming unequal power relations and changing society.

TOWARDS A GENDERED PERSPECTIVE

An approach for the ANC

The last approach needs to be seriously considered by the ANC, government and all those committed to democracy. It focuses on practical and immediate interventions that have to be made now, while at the same time pursuing the strategic objectives of transformation of the status quo. In this way, this approach addresses practical gender needs in a patriarchal society. These needs arise from past and existing gender roles which prescribe certain duties to women. For example, in South Africa where women have to perform roles such as child care-givers, caring for the aged and sick, fetching water and wood etc., strategies must be developed to ensure that women are given the opportunities to participate in other spheres of life. Provision of childcare and old-age facilities, water taps and so on goes a long way in addressing the practical gender needs to free women to engage in other economic, political and social activities.

Secondly, women in South Africa, particularly black women, have been at the bottom of the rung in terms of participation in economic, social and political life. Commitment to democratic participation has to be accompanied by capacity building programmes. This includes giving women the necessary skills and creating enabling environments in areas where they participate. For example, child care facilities need to be provided in workplaces and the culture of organisations needs to transform so that women do not have to face abuse and harassment in their workplaces.

Affirmative action should therefore not relate to the subjective level only that is, only placing individuals in positions of responsibility. It has to relate also to the objective level that is, changing the operations of institutions and rules to ensure that the experience and knowledge of the formerly excluded are brought in, as well as ensuring an environment that is favourable for the entry and operation of women. The ANC, for example, cannot look at affirmative action as simply a numbers game. It has to look more broadly at the functioning and attitudes of its structures and cadres which may actually disempower the very members it is meant for.

Importantly, the practical gender needs that are addressed have to take place in the overall context of an endeavour to transform the status quo. That means that the voice, knowledge and experience of those previously marginalised must be found at the centre of operations. The values and culture, the attitudes and traditional practices and all the unequal power relations between men and women must be systematically changed. While delivering on the quantitative practical gender needs, we must always be focusing on qualitative strategic gender interests.

Some of the questions that have to be resolved

- How does the ANC ensure a gendered perspective in all spheres of its life and work, its policies, programmes and structures?
- How do ANC institutions and structures reflect that integrated approach?
- How does the ANC ensure continuous and sustainable political education programmes to change attitudes and work towards the eradication of unequal gender relations? What gender training has to take place at what levels? How does the ANC integrate gender in its political education programmes?
- uWhat type of structures should the ANC have? Is the ANCWL the best suited structure for the current challenges? How, if it is, should it operate? What is the relationship between the ANCWL and the NEC Gender Sub-committee? How does the ANC ensure that gender and women are not dumped on the ANCWL without a meaningful political responsibility of the ANC as a whole?
- How does the ANC lead the processes of the formation of a Broad Women's Movement and what role does it see for that movement?
- How does the ANC ensure the implementation of affirmative action in a way that ensures access for groups and not individuals, ensuring both capacity for those who enter positions of responsibility as well as the creation of environments and support systems that are conducive for participation? What mechanisms should be used? How do we use targets and quotas that do not create opportunism and elitism? How does the ANC ensure that affirmative action is monitored?
- What indicators can the ANC set for itself to evaluate its advances in terms of the status of women and gender equality?

- What inputs does the ANC have to make in all government processes to address gender inequality?

THE CORE VALUES OF THE RDP

The ANC will, in the coming months, convene a major, pre-conference, policy summit. At this policy summit we will investigate further our specific policies on a range of areas from housing and health to jobs, economic growth, and safety and security. The purpose of this paper is not to elaborate upon specific areas of policy, all of which are related to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). In this paper we seek to reaffirm and elaborate the underlying, core values of the RDP. If we lose sight of these underlying core values we can easily lose our way under the pressures of events, or in the mass of technical details which we have to master.

THE RDP OUR ELECTORAL MANDATE

The ANC contested the April 1994 elections on the basis of a vision of "A Better Life for All". The outlines of, and the strategic path towards, this better life were elaborated in general terms in the RDP.

The RDP itself emerged from an extensive process, rooted in the participatory traditions of the Freedom Charter. These traditions were taken up with growing intensity in a series of conferences, workshops and policy-making forums led by the ANC in the late 1980s and the first half of the 1990s. The RDP also benefited from, and became popularised through people's forums during the election campaign in 1993/94.

"The Reconstruction and Development Programme. A Policy Framework" with which we contested the 1994 elections (sometimes referred to as the RDP "base document") was at once a great deal more than a vague list of election promises, and less than a fully elaborated programme of governance. Its broad vision and its fundamental approach to reconstruction and development remain valid. But it is not a detailed blue-print. It correctly describes itself as "a policy framework". We knew from the outset that the base document would need a great deal of elaboration in detail. Many areas are barely touched upon, many problems and challenges were only partly understood back in 1994.

THE CORE VISION OF THE RDP

The core vision of the RDP lies in the values and methods it proposes to achieve our national democratic transformation tasks in the conditions of our present national, regional and global circumstances. The RDP has four areas of principle concern:

- meeting basic needs;
- developing human resources;
- building the economy;

- democratising the state and society.

To tackle transformation on all these fronts, a programme is needed that is:

- people-centred;
- people-driven;
- innovative in the ways in which it combines growth and development;
- committed to continuously achieving overall coherence and unity of purpose.

These values and methods constitute the core vision of the RDP. The paper will now look more closely at each of these values and methods:

A People-Centred Approach

The RDP's starting point is to understand the all-round and deep seated crisis into which centuries of colonialism and decades of apartheid have plunged our society. Every aspect of our country our political institutions, our economy, social life, the very moral fabric of our communities has been deeply affected by the legacy of this past.

The RDP anchors itself in meeting human needs. In other words, it is self-consciously people-centred. These are not just "nice" phrases, but a very important starting point. The RDP is not rooted, in the first place, in this or that political or economic ideology it submits all such ideologies to the practical litmus test of meeting the fundamental human needs of our society.

The RDP asks to be judged in terms of its capacity to provide jobs, shelter, safe water, health-care, nutrition, relevant education, and safety and security to the people of South Africa. All other ideological considerations (for instance, socialism or the "free market"?), and all other technical considerations (for instance, optimal annual growth rates, or budget deficit reduction targets) are secondary to the overriding concern of meeting human needs, in a sustainable manner. In taking its stand on a people-centred approach, the RDP is not underrating the importance of technical competence, or budgetary discipline, nor does it undervalue the great importance of ideological debate, and the potential opportunities and risks of choosing one or another perspective. But the RDP refuses to lock itself into either preconceived technical or ideological dogma.

A People-Driven Approach

The RDP is not just people-centred, it also advances a people-driven approach. Once more, this seemingly simple assertion carries with it profound implications. In the first place, the people-driven approach reaffirms the traditions and experience of the ANC. The ANC is not just a party of mass support, it is a movement of mass participation.

Now that we are in government there are new challenges to these traditions. They include the challenge of ensuring that we transform government into an open and transparent process. This objective is valuable in its own right, but it is also the only way to ensure that the people in our country are able to understand and interact effectively with government.

A people-driven approach is also in line with emerging international progressive perspectives on sustainable development and governance. Top-down, administrative command systems have, over this past century, succeeded in opening up, for a time, important development in some developing countries. However, they have been associated with bureaucratic problems, often human rights abuses, the destruction of the environment, and the restriction of progressive civil society participation. Many of these systems have either collapsed or stagnated, and others are meeting increased popular resistance.

The RDP's people-driven approach should also be seen as part of a broader African Renaissance, spearheaded by popular movements in many countries of our continent. It is a renaissance in which economic development, popular participation and respect for human rights are seen as part and parcel of the same process. In many countries, this renaissance is a rejection of both inefficient, and sometimes corrupt, post-colonial bureaucracies, and of the absolute hegemony of technical programmes of structural adjustment imposed by imperialist countries and institutions.

The RDP people-driven approach is not an attempt to avoid the responsibilities that we have for governing. But it is a recognition that being the overwhelming majority party in national government does not mean that the ANC has "all power". Without the combination of effective government and the mobilisation of millions of South Africans, the tasks of transformation will be impossible. The transformation of government itself requires an effort from both within and without our government institutions.

The people-driven approach of the RDP recognises that one of the paralysing legacies of apartheid colonialism is the de-humanisation of many of our people. A passive expectation of "delivery from on high" is itself part of the apartheid legacy, the perpetuation of a victim mentality. The idea that the "world now owes me a favour because I was a victim of apartheid oppression" may well be understandable, but it simply confirms and continues a cycle of dependency.

We were able to defeat the apartheid regime because we were able to help organise and mobilise the majority, helping them to transform themselves from victims to being their own emancipators. The same principles, the same basic vision must apply in the ongoing struggle to overcome the all-round legacy of national oppression.

Where we fail to take the people-driven approach, we often play directly into the hands of those who seek to sink the RDP. These are the forces which, while continuing to retain very significant powers and privileges, are happy to see the ANC in government single-handedly carry all the responsibility for "delivery". Rather than seeing the aspirations of the majority of our people as "illegitimate", as "unrealistic", as a "threat to stability" we need to see these aspirations as the motive force for ongoing transformation. But we are not arguing for populism. The aspirations of the majority now, as in the past, need to be organised, given strategic purpose, and located within a broad social vision.

In other words, to lay stress on the people-driven approach is to underline the importance of the ANC as an effective, mass-based, grass-roots formation. It is also to

lay stress on our alliance, and on the need for a vibrant mass democratic movement and broader, progressive civil society formations.

Growth and Development

All of the above connects decisively to the profound linkage that the RDP envisages between reconstruction and development. In making this linkage, the RDP very self-consciously breaks with alternative views. As paragraph 1.3.6 of the RDP base document succinctly notes of this linkage:

> *This is in contrast to a commonly held view that growth and development, or growth and redistribution are processes that contradict each other. Growth the measurable increase in the output of the modern industrial economy is commonly seen as the priority that must precede development. Development is portrayed as a marginal effort of redistribution to areas of urban and rural poverty. In this view, development is a deduction from growth. The RDP breaks decisively with this approach. If growth is defined as an increase in output, then it is of course a basic goal. However, where that growth occurs, how sustainable it is, how it is distributed, the degree to which it contributes to building long-term productive capacity and human resource development, and what impact it has on the environment, are the crucial questions when considering reconstruction and development. The RDP integrates growth, development, reconstruction and redistribution into a unified programme.*

In other words, the RDP base document insists that economic growth must be interrelated with the qualitative improvement in people's lives.

A Coherent and Integrated Programme

This underlines the importance of the final core RDP value which, at this time, needs to be constantly reaffirmed. The RDP will only succeed if it is able to become a relatively coherent and integrated programme. The crisis of our society cannot be resolved piece-meal or by way of short-cuts.

This general observation underlines a number of key issues:

- at a governmental level we have battled, for many obvious reasons, to maintain the coherence of our efforts. We have discussed this challenge and the solutions to it within the ANC in an ongoing way, including at the January 1997 NEC lekgotla. The restructuring of government RDP co-ordination, the clustering of ministries to prevent narrow departmentalisation, and proposals for a policy coordination planning unit in the presidency are all part and parcel of this ongoing effort to ensure a coherent governmental approach to reconstruction and development;
- coherence is required not just at the national level, but also across all three spheres of governance (national, provincial and local). It is here that our pioneering ideas on co-operative governance have special relevance;
- since the RDP is more than a government "delivery" programme, the coherence of our effort has to be ensured from within and beyond government, in broader

civil society. It is here that the rebuilding of the ANC becomes absolutely central this rebuilding needs to focus on the organisational, mobilisational and policy-making capacities of our organisation;

- reconstruction and development within South Africa will not be sustainable unless it is part and parcel of the broader reconstruction and development of Southern Africa. It is in this context that our ongoing political, economic and trade interaction with our region needs to be understood. It is also within this framework that major developmental programmes like the Maputo Corridor must be appreciated.

OPPOSITION TO THE RDP

When the RDP base document was first unveiled early in 1994 it met with a very hostile, or at best a patronising, reception from our opponents. It was declared to be "naive", "an impossible wish list", and an "attempt to be all things to everyone". After the April 1994 elections, in the face of an overwhelming ANC electoral majority and with the RDP now official government policy, some of these same forces attempted to kill the RDP with kindness.

Opportunistic elements declared themselves to be the RDP's only hope of delivery, as they manoeuvred to obtain what they imagined would be lucrative government "RDP" contracts. They actively sought to re-define the content of the RDP to suit their own objectives. Not all of this was necessarily a bad thing. From the outset, it was clear that the RDP would require the active participation of the private sector for reconstruction and development. But the RDP was never a simple "market-driven" programme. Apart from self-serving "kindness", the RDP has also continued to be the target of a more openly hostile campaign to sink it. This campaign has been conducted on a number of fronts:

On the one hand, there has been a "where is your delivery?" campaign. The RDP base document is reduced to a few statistical targets (one million houses in five years, for instance), and declared "a failure" because we are behind in regard to this or that target. Those who have plunged our country into its present crisis through decades of misrule, and those who continue to retain immense economic power in our country, are usually those who shout loudest about the "failure to deliver" as if the RDP were no more than a numbers game.

Another continuous threat to the RDP lies in narrow sectoral, or single-issue campaigns that seek to undermine the broader coherence of what we are trying to do. Hysteria around crime, consciously or unconsciously, often leads to attempts to erode the human rights culture that is integral to overall reconstruction and development. Panic about a falling rand is deliberately fanned and then used in attempts to divert us from our broader projects. This is not to say that we can be complacent about either crime or the value of the rand.

There have also been attempts to marginalise the RDP institutionally. When there was still an RDP Office in the Presidency, there was a continuous attempt to portray this Office as "the RDP". In other words, despite what was continuously asserted by the ANC-led government, there was an attempt to confine the RDP to a ministry without

portfolio, and to confine the budgetary resources of the RDP to the special RDP fund, a tiny fraction of the overall budget. The RDP was in danger of being a few hundred projects as important as many of these were and not the overall policy framework of government.

When the RDP Office was closed and responsibility for the governmental co-ordination of the RDP was restructured, the opponents of the RDP claimed the "RDP was dead".

Every other opportunity has been seized upon to pronounce the RDP "dead". In particular, government's macro-economic policy, GEAR, is commonly portrayed as the final death blow to the RDP. This is asserted notwithstanding the very clear statement, in GEAR itself, that it seeks to be a macro-economic framework for and not against the RDP.

The extent to which GEAR is, in practice, supportive of RDP objectives is the subject of extensive debate within the ANC-led tripartite alliance, and also more widely within progressive circles. This is a debate that should be encouraged, but it should also be noted that, at least within the alliance, no-one is calling into question the core values of the RDP. The macro-economic debate is, essentially, about how to achieve RDP objectives in a sustainable way. We fall into the trap of our own opponents when, from one or the other side, we present the intra-alliance debate as being between pro- and anti-RDP positions.

It should not be surprising that the RDP, a vast national democratic programme of political, social and economic transformation, should meet with opposition. Its redistributive and developmental approach threatens the short-term powers and privileges of many of those who benefited from the apartheid past.

Unfortunately, however, the campaigns directed against the RDP have had a real impact upon the morale of some progressive circles. Some progressive forces believe, in good faith, that the RDP is dead, that the closure of the RDP Office was the death certificate and the adoption of GEAR the funeral rites.

We need, as an ANC, to ask ourselves to what extent we have contributed to these relatively widespread impressions. Did we act energetically and transparently to explain the pro-RDP reasons for relocation of the overall governmental co-ordination of the RDP? Had we thought through this co-ordination sufficiently at the time of this relocation? Have we devoted sufficient resources to elaborating and explaining what we are attempting to do in terms of macro-economic policy?

To what extent have we, ourselves, fallen into the delivery numbers game, allowing ourselves to be measured narrowly according to what could only have been very generalised objectives elaborated in 1994? To counter the anti-RDP campaign, and to counter any demoralisation that there might be about the continuing relevance of the RDP, it has become crucial to to reaffirm the core values contained in the RDP with which we fought and won the elections of 1994.

THE RDP IS MORE RELEVANT THAN EVER

The RDP "base document" was a policy framework, not a blue-print, not a sacred text whose every sentence has to be implemented to the letter. It is precisely this framework, these core values that remain decisively important.

We never imagined that drawing up an RDP document before elections and winning an overwhelming electoral majority were sufficient in themselves to consolidate the RDP vision for all time. The RDP strikes at the institutions, structures and social interests of those forces that have grown rich and powerful out of minority rule. While their own long-term interests may also lie in an overall reconstruction and development process, we can expect many powerful forces to campaign actively to undermine the RDP. The defence and elaboration of the RDP's core values is part and parcel of the struggle for reconstruction and development itself.

Re-stating these general strategic, political and moral values of the RDP may seem to be "over-general", and "vague". Yet it is precisely the tendency to lose sight of them in the maze of technicalities and pressures of our transition that contributes to the weakening of our capacity to provide broad leadership to our organisation, our movement, and to our country at large. At our December 1997 National Conference, we need, as the ANC, to discuss, elaborate and reaffirm, loudly and clearly, the core values of our electoral mandate, the RDP.

NATION-FORMATION AND NATION BUILDING

The National Question in South Africa

INTRODUCTION

The national question has been an area of intense debate within the ranks of the ANC. This arises from the character of the freedom struggle for national emancipation - to sharpen our understanding of the tasks that the National Democratic Revolution is meant to accomplish.

In the current phase of transition and transformation, it is critical that we revisit this discussion, to ensure that we share a common understanding of this complex question. This applies both to our challenge of transforming South African society, as well as the challenge of how we order the internal life of our organisation.

BACKGROUND

Colonial conquest in South Africa had two contradictory consequences. On the one hand, it brought together various different communities into one nation-state. On the

other hand, this very conquest was used by the colonisers to try and prevent the unity of these communities into one nation.

The discovery of diamonds and gold in the late 19th Century (1800's) signified the beginning of capitalism and, at the same time, a new era in the history of the country. Thousands of people who were previously separated in self-subsistence economies, were either forced or attracted to the emerging industries to provide labour.

Transport networks were laid to connect the industrial hubs with the harbours. New towns emerged, further bringing together, into a single economy, communities which were previously separated. Peasant Afrikaner farmers began producing for the broader market, while Africans - dispossessed of their land - did not only become providers of labour, but also consumers of commercial products.

One natural result of this was the emergence of the colonisers' language(s) as a medium of communication through which economic activity was conducted. In the process, aspects of the colonisers' culture - material and otherwise - gained currency among all communities.

The importation of slaves and indentured labour by the Dutch East India Company from Indonesia, Malaysia and India also helped to shape the make-up of South Africa's population. These people had been oppressed in the countries they originate from, and were subjected to the same colonial treatment in South Africa. Along with this, was the emergence of the indigenous "Coloured" community.

It is the irony of our history, that this whole process, which crowned South Africa's revolution into one nation-state, was also the seed of later decades of struggles and bloody conflict. This arose because the state was colonial in character, whether it was in the form of the Union in 1910, or the Republic in 1960. Power was handed over by the British conquerors to the settler colonial community to continue the exploitation of indigenous Africans, in particular, and the black majority in general.

THE ESSENCE OF THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The national question plays itself out in different ways which are specific to the concrete conditions in various parts of the world. Nevertheless, it is fundamentally a continuous search for equality by various communities which have historically merged into a single nation-state, or the struggle for self-determination and even secession by communities within such states.

In the global context, the national question is fundamentally a an on going search for national sovereignty or self-rule.

A number of basic principles should be taken into account in addressing the national question in our country. These are summarised below in the form of ten theses:

THESIS 1

The liberation movement in South Africa characterised our society as Colonialism of a Special Type to describe the unique situation where both the colonisers and the colonised shared one country.

The basic conclusion arising from this, is that the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) is an act of addressing the national question: to create a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society. The "national character" of the NDR is therefore the resolution of the antagonistic contradictions between the oppressed majority and their oppressors; as well as the resolution of the national grievance arising from the colonial relations.

THESIS 2

National oppression and its legacy are linked closely to class exploitation. Part of the debates on the characterisation of South Africa under apartheid was the question of whether national oppression was a necessary condition for South African capitalism, or whether, in fact, South African capitalism was a necessary condition for national oppression.

What this debate highlights is that national oppression can only be successfully addressed in the context of socio-economic transformation.

This entails much more than competition among the "multi-racial" middle strata and classes for material benefits that can be gained out of the achievement of democracy, a phenomenon to which concepts like "black empowerment" popularly tend to be reduced. Rather, it means improving the quality of life of the poor, the overwhelming majority of whom are defined by South African capitalism as blacks in general, and Africans in particular. In other words, the implementation of the RDP is an essential part of addressing the national question.

THESIS 3

A nation is not equivalent to a classless society. This would be a contradiction in terms, because the concept of class is by definition an international phenomenon, requiring the "withering away" of nations as such.

A nation is a multi-class entity. Under a system of capitalism, it will have its bourgeoisie, middle strata, rural communities - rich and poor. The objective of the NDR is not the creation of a socialist or communist society, though its progression, for those who adhere to these aims, does not exclude these long-term consequences.

Among the central tasks of the NDR is the improvement of the quality of life of especially the poor, and also to ensure that in the medium-to long-term, the place that individuals occupy in society is not defined by race. The opposite is the case in present day South Africa, where the poor are by definition mostly black, whilst the majority of the rich are by definition white.

An important part of this is that the NDR also entails the building of a black bourgeoisie. The tendering conditions that government has introduced, and its encouragement of the

private sector to promote all kinds of "empowerment", aptly illustrate this. The reality is that the bigger and more successful this black bourgeoisie becomes, the more diminished its race consciousness will become, for example in its attitude to workers, and dealing with unions.

At the same time, the unfolding NDR has also meant the fast growth of a black middle strata. This process will speed up even more as opportunities open up in various areas of life.

The democratic movement must seek to influence these classes and strata - both black and white - to take an active part in the realisation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. This would then enable them to act/ behave in a way that promotes South Africa's true interests.

THESIS 4

Apartheid was successful in crippling working class unity, and that legacy is still felt today.

The ANC enjoys the support of the majority of the Coloured and Indian middle strata. What we usually refer to as the Coloured and Indian question has to do with the expression of fears of the working class (including the unemployed) among these communities. These fears relate to the perception that the rise of the African worker and the African poor, directly impacts on the comparative privilege that apartheid gave them in relation to African people. Similarly, this applies to white workers, which is partly why many of them became the mass base of the ultra-right. There are, of course, other important elements that come into play such as language, religion, racism and the geographic separation of communities.

This unique situation underlines the centrality of building working class unity as key to creating the South African nation.

THESIS 5

It is important to realise that the national question is also a superstructural phenomenon at the level of consciousness, "feelings" and perceptions. Thus, it has an important and dynamic momentum of its own, underpinned by factors such as language, culture and religion. The social psychological element of the national question can therefore be used effectively to promote the process of forming a nation, or indeed, to undermine it.

One of our greatest successes in the transition has been to promote the "feeling" of pride in being South African, including through activities like sport, which may seem trivial. Capturing the national imagination through the campaign for a "New Patriotism" is critical to nation-building.

However, the social psychological phenomenon on its own is not sustainable without socio-economic transformation. Neither can it be accepted as universally credible in a situation in which the beneficiaries of apartheid do not accept that they have to forego

some of these privileges. The rumblings on issues such as education, welfare grants, labour matters, and so on, are a reflection of this problem.

THESIS 6

Individuals are social beings with different social experiences, class backgrounds, political histories, religious affiliations as well as sport and music preferences. With regard to the national question; race, ethnic origins, language and sometimes even religion, have an important role to play in defining a person's identity. Above all, the fact of belonging to this country and this state, is itself an important definer of identity.

Therefore, individuals will have multiple identities: for instance being a South African with a specific mother tongue, class position, political and religious affiliation and so on. These identities do not necessarily disappear in the melting pot of broad South Africanism. Rather, they can all co-exist in healthy combination. The fundamental question that has to be asked is which identity assumes prominence, and under what conditions.

To deny the reality of these identities by the democratic movement is to create a vacuum which can easily be exploited by counter-revolution.

However, the main thrust of the NDR is not to promote fractured identities, but to encourage the emergence of a common South African identity. At the same time, it should be noted that some of the identities associated with "culture" or "ethnicity" or "religion" can in fact be contradictory to the building of a new nation that is based on principles of equity. For example, these attributes are used as an excuse to perpetuate gender oppression, or to campaign for racial or ethnic divisions among citizens.

THESIS 7

From its characterisation of apartheid colonialism, the ANC was correct in asserting, in the documents on Strategy and Tactics from the Morogoro and Kabwe Consultative Conferences, that the main content of the NDR is the liberation of Black people in general, and Africans in particular. They are in the majority, and they constitute even an overwhelmingly larger majority of the poor.

Related to this is the identity of the South African nation in the making: whether it should truly be an African nation on the African continent, or a clone, for example, of the US and UK in outlook; in the style and content of its media, in its cultural expression, in its food, in the language accents of its children, and so forth. Hence, what is required is a continuing battle to assert African hegemony in the context of a multi-cultural and non-racial society.

It is debatable whether the popular imagery of a "rainbow nation" is useful in this respect. There is an important role that it does play as popular imagery. But it used to express the character of South African society as one made up of black Africans who pay allegiance to Africa, whites who pay allegiance to Europe, Indians who pay allegiance to India and Coloureds somewhere in the undefined middle of the rainbow, then it can be problematic. For it would fail to recognise the healthy osmosis among the various

cultures and other attributes in the process towards the emergence of a new African nation.

THESIS 8

Futhermore, Morogoro was correct to assert that this main content of the NDR should find expression in the leadership structures of the ANC, and indeed in the country as a whole. This is usually referred to as "African leadership".

However, this principle does not imply mechanical proportional representation in leadership structures. In other words, that we should do "ethnic, racial, language, gender and class arithmetic" in composing leadership structures.

The principle of African leadership and balanced representation in racial, gender, ethnic and class terms is a broad one, which should find broad expression in actual practice. Yet, attention should always be paid to these broad groupings because a critical mass can be reached where perceptions of dominance can take root.

The principle of African leadership does not mean moving away from merit: One cannot proceed from the premise that it is people, other that African people, who have merit. However, apartheid deliberately denied opportunities to Blacks in general, and Africans in particular. Therefore, it is critical that deliberate steps are taken to empower them to play their role. Affirmative action is meant to address this, and naturally, it is those who have been most disadvantaged who ought to be the foremost beneficiaries of such a programme.

THESIS 9

The national question can never be fully resolved. This is because it is not merely a material question, or one that is it related solely to various forms of power. This derives from the fact that emotional and psychological factors are attached to it. In addition, people will continue to have multiple identities.

Instead, the challenge is to maintain a healthy equilibrium between centrifugal ("disintegrative") and centripetal ("integrative") tendencies.

Indeed, as we seek to integrate South African society across racial, language, ethnic and other barriers, we are also engaged in the process of developing those individual elements that distinguish these various communities from one another.

It will not be possible to achieve the kind of balance that will satisfy everyone for all time, even if the broad principle is attained in practice. This is aggravated by the fact that individuals compete for positions in politics, the academic terrain, the economy and elsewhere. The more dishonest and underhanded ones among them might seek to use criteria which exclude those who have historically been disadvantaged, or to use the racial, ethnic and /or language card to advance their personal ambitions.

Even within the ANC, tensions will flare up from time to time, especially in periods such as preparations for National Conference and other allocations of positions of power and influence.

THESIS 10

The process of nation formation depends on objective conditions such as the fact of an integrated national economy, the historical evolution of a nation-state, national identity and so on. This objective environment is itself a product of human activity; in our case represented broadly in the act of colonisation and the struggle against it .

This struggle was itself an important and conscious act of nation-building. To this extent, the ANC (and other political movements), the new government and organs of civil society, have a critical role to play in facilitating the emergence of a new nation: in nation-building.

This includes striving for consistent and thorough-going democracy, effecting socio-economic transformation, and encouraging a New Patriotism. It must also include the elimination of the geographical separation along racial and ethnic lines, in the programmes to provide housing and other services.

CONCLUSION

These are not necessarily all the critical matters relating to the national question. Within the ANC we should ensure open, rigorous and dignified debate on an issue that will be with us for a long time to come. This is even more critical for an organisation for whom it is historically necessary, to be theoretically and practically, a microcosm of the non-racial society we seek to build.

Arising from such discussion, we also need to determine how, in practical terms, to put in place a programme aimed at speeding up the de-racialisation of South African society in all respects. This could be backed up by concrete targets to measure progress in this regard.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE ON SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Deepening and consolidating the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) is not only a matter relating to what we do inside the country, but it is equally a matter relating to our position and relationships we develop in the international arena. For the ANC and

our democratic government to place emphasis on international matters is in the deepest interest of our democratic revolution, and not a move away from our reconstruction and development tasks.

The more the international climate is sensitive to the developmental and democratic aspirations of developing countries like ours, the more we will be able to better consolidate the NDR. Similarly, an international environment which regards the national liberation of oppressed peoples as fundamental will be more conducive to our own nation-building process than one which in practice tolerates instances of national oppression.

For us to be involved in the resolution of problems like in the former Zaire, is part of contributing to the creation of a peaceful and democratic continent within which our own democracy can best flourish.

A South Africa that is thriving and experiencing growth and development in a Southern African or on a continent that is experiencing poverty and underdevelopment will increase the problems of illegal entry into the country, drug trafficking and many other such related problems. It is therefore important to ensure that South Africa is deeply involved in the revival, economic growth and development of Southern Africa and the continent as a whole.

The aims of this discussion document therefore are the following:

- To assist our membership in understanding and debating about the international environment in which we find ourselves as an important component of advancing our struggle;
- To identify key strategic issues facing us in the international arena with a view to facilitating debate towards developing appropriate detailed policies. Therefore, the paper is not a chronicle of foreign policy events and issues over the last three years nor does it pretend to deal with all the detailed issues facing South Africa in the international arena. Rather, it attempts to provide a framework within which detailed policies can be developed;
- To contribute towards the empowerment of our general membership with a framework within which to engage international issues.

A BRIEF REFLECTION ON OUR FOREIGN POLICY EXPERIENCES OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS

Our ability to interact properly with our international environment is dependent on an open and critical reflection on our experiences since our electoral victory and the establishment of the government of national unity (GNU) in 1994.

The 1994 policy document on international affairs adopted by national conference commits the ANC to the following:

- Promotion of democracy and human rights, based on the belief and understanding that just and lasting solutions to the problems of humankind can only come through the promotion of democracy worldwide;

- Promotion of international peace as a goal to which all nations must strive;
- Commitment to the development of the African continent and the Southern African region in particular;
- A belief that South Africa's economic development depends on the growing regional and international economic co-operation in an interdependent world;
- That our international relations must mirror our deep commitment to the consolidation of a democratic South Africa;
- Underpinning all this is our anti-imperialist, anti-colonial and anti-neocolonial commitments in international relations;
- Development of a just and equitable world order in which tackling the problems facing Southern Africa, Africa and indeed the whole of the South is at the top of the international agenda;

The identification of these principles cannot be considered idealistic which shifts our focus away from the harsh realities of "national interest". Rather, the identification of such principles should be seen as an essential part of defining the national interest. Nevertheless, with the benefit of three years of experience, it is becoming more and more clear that the difficult challenge is to translate these principles into effective governmental policies and actions in our relations with particular countries and within various international forums.

Universally accepted human rights, for instance are often disputed in their interpretation and relevance among different societies and cultures, and among countries at different levels of development. Answering the question of how to translate our call for human rights into effective policies requires an analysis of the current international situation and South Africa's place and role in it.

Although this paper largely emerges from an implicit reflection on our experiences over the last three years, it is important to briefly highlight some of these. They include:

- One of the very first test cases for us in the area of promoting democracy and human rights Nigeria highlighted the potential limits of our influence if we act as an individual country. This further highlighted the importance and need to act in concert with others and to forge strategic alliances in pursuit of foreign policy objectives. The search for such alliances needs to take place, in part, within existing multilateral institutions and forums like the OAU and United Nations. We need to become an increasingly active participant in these organisations, recognising that acting multiletarally almost always involves negotiations and compromise. But we need also, as a movement, to be seeking to act to forge a whole range of relations with peoples, progressive social movements and like-minded political parties in pursuit of a transformatory agenda.
- Despite the end to the Cold War, Africa as a continent is still a site for the advancement of some of the geo-political and strategic interests of the powerful Western countries. Much more importantly, given the new international situation, this is being pursued mainly through economic means because there is no longer any rational political reason for direct physical or military intervention. That type of intervention used to happen when the West claimed that they were fighting against the spread of communism. In other words, the

economic objectives of western powers (the spread of capitalism and accumulation on a world scale) has not come to an end with the Cold War.

- The world is increasingly being divided into economic blocs, particularly in the developed economies, and unless the South (developing countries) act together in both multi-lateral forums and in economic relations, there is little chance for properly challenging the unjust world order.
- South Africa's geo-strategic location and relatively high-profile, given the international image of both our country and the President, are no guarantee for entry into the international arena on our own terms. In addition, we are, in global terms, a small, middle-income country.
- International relations are not merely based on solidarity, but largely on economic interests, particularly of the most developed countries. This is an important lesson for us. Even though we once benefited from international solidarity in the struggle against apartheid, this has not necessarily translated into favourable terms for South Africa's full integration in the international arena.
- Much as there is a need to create a common agenda with the African continent and the developing world, there is no agreement on views or practices within the bloc of developing nations themselves, particularly on the very same issues that provide the major platform for our foreign policy (democracy, human rights and justice). In other words, the South itself , as well as Africa, is full of contradictions that could potentially undermine the creation of a common agenda. These contradictions within the developing world have emerged already in a number of international forums when faced with critical issues. These countries were recently divided on the question of nuclear arms proliferation, elimination of landmines and the social clauses in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). In some instances, guided by our commitment to democracy and human rights, we have had to vote differently from some of our closest allies, and sometimes vote differently from almost the entire developing world.
- Much more significantly, our involvement in the resolution of the problems in the Great Lakes, particularly in the former Zaire, has taught us a number of lessons about the realities on the African continent and some of the challenges facing a country like ours and the continent as a whole. For instance, whilst countries like France and the United States were committed to the resolution of the problems there, they were also trying to resolve these problems in a way that strengthens their own influence in that region, thus almost undermining the relatively peaceful transition in the former Zaire. However, a positive lesson out of the OAU and South Africa's role there is that Africans themselves are capable of resolving their own problems
- Another important lesson and challenge is that given South Africa's stature on the continent and the world, it is not always possible to act in a way that satisfies the expectations of other countries, particularly those on the African continent. This necessarily poses the question to our movement in particular, on how we build our capacity to make an effective contribution on the continent and in the world, whilst at the same time not exaggerating what we can do and achieve. It is in fact in this context that the notion of an African Renaissance has arisen, as the best framework through which we can empower the continent to act for itself and its interests.

CHARACTERISING THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

Our policy document adopted at the 1994 national conference, as outlined above, provides a perspective and a foundation from which to understand the current international situation and further refine our international policy, particularly in the light of our experiences in the last three years in government.

Our foreign policy document mentions certain features of the current global reality that we have to engage with. For example it describes the "emerging global economic circumstances" as being "not conducive to the development of democratic cultures in African states". It continues to say that with regard to the "concentration of the global economy into trading blocs", and the new features of this global environment, Africa is again the victim of a new and terribly unjust global system, thus creating a difficult environment of the consolidation of our own democratic gains.

The process of transition in our own country is taking place against the background of enormous changes in the international context. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the East European bloc of socialist countries fundamentally altered both the global balance of forces and the content of international relations. The collapse of the Soviet Union brought in a world that is dominated by the capitalist system.

There is no longer a bloc of socialist countries which could, to some extent, serve as an alternative pole around which developing countries like ours could construct their trade, aid and strategic relations.

The end of the Cold War, marked by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the bloc of socialist countries, certainly had some positive effects. For instance, it undermined the support of repressive regimes by imperialist countries throughout the world, as the Cold War, anti-Communist argument could no longer be used. This might have further contributed to the advancement towards a negotiated settlement in our own country.

At the same time, however, the collapse of the Soviet Union had the effect of reducing international support for national liberation struggles, as well as the absence of space and support for developing countries to develop alternative economic and political policies relatively independently from the ideas set out by the Western capitalist countries. The cases of the Palestinian, East Timorese and Western Saharan struggles are all testimony to the reality that the end of the Cold War has not necessarily led to the resolution of such conflicts in favour of nationally oppressed peoples.

At the same time, this new world order has opened up dangerous forces of ethnic mobilisation and genocide in various parts of the world. This is largely as a result of the reconstitution of states after the collapse of the Soviet Union and socialist bloc of countries, as well as economic and political solutions being imposed by some Western powers that are not consistent with the realities in many developing countries.

The above reality is as a result of the fact that the emerging global order has had the further effect of laying down political conditions to many developing countries as pre-conditions for aid and trade relations. The introduction of multi-party systems with

regular elections became a requirement for getting international aid, with marginalisation being the penalty for those who do not comply.

While the right to form political parties and participate in democratic elections is undoubtedly a fundamental democratic right, multi-party systems have been introduced in Africa in circumstances where other conditions have had the effect of weakening the capacity of governments to stop the explosion of ethnic wars. This is because ethnicity and religious differences often become mobilising platforms in contexts where the immediate prospects of bringing about any improvement in the lot of the majority look bleak. The prime example of this is the demand for immediate elections in a country like the Democratic Republic of Congo (the former Zaire) in a context where the state has collapsed, and there is also a long history of dictatorship and the existence of 250 ethnic groups and about 400 ethnically based political parties. Whilst the Democratic Republic of Congo will have to establish itself as a democracy, the question is: under what conditions and circumstances should this transition happen?

Perhaps the most important lesson to be learnt out of the current international situation is that whilst the Cold-War has ended, this does not translate into the developing world benefiting out of this situation. Instead, the goals being pursued by Western developed countries that of consolidating capitalism on a world scale have not changed. It is only the context under which they are being pursued that has changed.

Therefore, we are faced with the reality that, despite the end of the Cold War, the capitalist system has not resolved the differences within even the most advanced countries. Indeed, in most of them, the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen, reflected not only in the ever-rising so-called "natural unemployment," but also in poverty wages. Among the nations of the world, the gap between developed and developing countries is as wide as ever.

GLOBALISATION AS A STRATEGY THAT WE CANNOT AVOID

Globalisation is a term that is widely used and thus subject to various interpretations. Furthermore, it is a term that attempts to characterise and understand the current international reality. The approach taken in this paper is that globalisation is a strategy which cannot simply be described as referring only or largely to trade matters on an international scale, but is at the heart of international relations today, whether at the trade, economic or political level. Therefore, any attempt to reduce globalisation merely to questions of trade and the economy is to avoid the single most defining characteristic of the current world order.

More fundamentally, globalisation has to be recognised as a process aimed at turning the entire globe into a single global market operating according to a universal set of rules. Much more importantly, globalisation also subjects the international political and economic institutions, as well as national political institutions, to this overarching global market, thereby making globalisation a political phenomenon.

In globalisation, the monopoly companies of the advanced capitalist countries, particularly trans-national corporations, set most of the agenda. As such, the real

danger exists that political and economic policy of governments throughout the world can be dictated to by these corporations. Already, the content and form of globalisation of trade, investment and capital flows, and the operation of some of the most important multilateral institutions (the World Bank, the IMF and other organs) largely reflects the wishes of these corporations.

Closely linked to the process of globalisation is a drive towards liberalisation. This phenomenon has given rise to a new policy agenda, known as neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism looks at deregulated global business and reducing the role of the state, as the pre-conditions and only route to economic growth and development, both at national and international levels.

The most serious outcome of this is that it undermines national sovereignty of countries, even more so in the developing world. This happens to such a degree that some developing countries have to seek IMF or World Bank approval of their national budgets, before giving them to their parliaments for adoption. Therefore the danger is that we can enter the new millennium in an international environment where countries, particularly developing countries, have given up their sovereignty.

The essence of globalisation and its political implications on an international scale is usefully captured by Hobsbawm in his book Age of Extremes, 1994. He argues that although countries traded with each other to a growing extent "the bulk of their economic activities remained home-centred" and the world economy remained international. From the late 1960's on, however, an "increasingly transnational economy began to emerge" characterised by "a system of economic activities for which state territories and state frontiers are not the basic framework, but complicating factors". It is this transition from an international to a transnational world economy that defines the present phase of globalisation.

There are two approaches that as a movement we should avoid in dealing with the new global world order. The first approach argues that South Africa should integrate itself into this "unproblematic" reality without question as the only way for the growth of South Africa's domestic economy. In other words, South Africa should treat itself merely as a "municipality" of this "global village". The second approach is of an ultra-leftist kind, which argues that any form of engagement with the institutions of governance of the world economy will make us subordinate to the dictates of neo-liberalism.

Both these approaches are wrong. The weakness of the first approach is that it takes no serious account of the unevenness, imbalances and inequalities of the current global environment. Particularly, it does not recognise the fact that the current international situation is not necessarily structured to the advantage of a country like South Africa. This approach makes us submit to this reality without an attempt to challenge or reshape it. The weakness of the second approach is that it fails to realise that South Africa is a small country that is already heavily dependent on and inextricably tied to the current international economic regime. In addition, this approach fails to recognise the degree to which a struggle for the deepening and consolidation of the NDR needs to be accompanied by an active foreign policy seeking to maximise opportunities within existing norms and structures.

Within this international reality there are opportunities that need to be creatively used. It is the task of revolutionary democrats and humanists everywhere to recognise the dangers. But it is more critical for us to identify opportunities in the search for a just, humane and equitable world order. However, the extent to which existing opportunities are creatively utilised is largely dependent on the capacity of a country like South Africa to forge links with the rest of the continent and the developing world as a whole. Such links and alliances should be driven by a vision and agenda aimed at creating a just and equitable world order. The ANC correctly seeks to take active part in shaping this order, both in the context of its relations with other parties and movements, and as the leading organisation in government. Hence the importance of an agenda based on a vision of an African Renaissance.

THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REVIVAL OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT TOWARDS AN AFRICAN RENAISSANCE?

The ANC has correctly placed the African continent very high in its international policy and international relations. Such a priority is informed by the following considerations:

- The fact that South Africa is part of the African continent, and that its economic development is linked to what happens on the continent as a whole;
- The fact that South Africa has an important role to play in the economic and political revival of the continent;
- The fact that the economic development of the African continent as a whole will be a significant step in overcoming the North-South divide.

It for these reasons that the concept of an African Renaissance is being advanced as the main pillar of our international policy not only relating to Africa, but in all our international relations globally. The concept of an African Renaissance provides a powerful vision not only for the African continent but for the development of a just and equitable world order. It is for this very reason that an African Renaissance poses a threat to the strategy of globalising capitalism. In fact, globalisation contradicts the very agenda of the Renaissance. Therefore, the success of the Renaissance depends on the depth of and extent to which it challenges globalisation.

Some of the key elements of the Renaissance vision should include the following:

- The economic recovery of the African continent as a whole; The establishment of political democracy on the continent;
- The need to break neo-colonial relations between Africa and the world's economic powers;
- The mobilisation of the people of Africa to take their destiny into their own hands thus preventing the continent being a place for the attainment of geo-political and strategic interests of the world's most powerful countries;
- Fast development of a people-driven and people-centred economic growth and development aimed at meeting the basic needs of the people.

At the core of this African agenda should be the entrenchment of stable democracies, dislocating neo-colonialism, sustainable development and an end to superpower scramble for Africa. In other words, at the core of the vision for an African Renaissance

is a sustained and vigilant challenge against the strategic orientation of globalisation. To realise this requires close co-operation between progressive forces on the continent to define this common agenda.

However, developing a common agenda for an African renewal also requires co-operation with other forces that might not necessarily be progressive around key strategic issues within this African agenda. This may include widely accepted goals like rapid economic growth, the elimination of armed conflicts, including the temptation to resolve political problems through armed force; and protection of national sovereignty. In other words there is a growing realisation in Africa itself, as reflected by the 33rd OAU summit, that a Renaissance is not possible in an environment of conflict and instability.

South Africa and the OAU's role in the resolution of the problems in the Great Lakes region, particularly the question of the establishment of democracy in the Democratic Republic of Congo, is a learning example of the potential for Africa to resolve its own problems without interference from the imperialist countries. At the same time one major lesson learnt from such involvement is the extent to which powerful countries like France and the US still want to see their interests being of central importance on the African continent.

For an African renaissance to be a reality requires that this process be led by the most progressive sectors of African society. This bloc of forces represents an alliance of the working class, the peasants, the poor, the middle classes and progressive sectors of an emerging African bourgeoisie. However, the unevenness of the strength and level of development of these social forces on the continent poses a difficult question.

Related to the above issue is that of the economic and social policies which Africa should follow. It would have to take account of the power of the capitalist global forces, but at the same time build on the power of the progressive social forces in Africa. This also requires the re-positioning of the OAU so that it is able to play an important economic role.

We need to work out what it means in practice to place human rights, justice and democracy at the forefront of our foreign policy. This certainly should not mean that we should refuse to conduct any diplomatic and trade relations with countries whose record in human rights or democracy we regard as unsatisfactory. But it should also not mean that when we engage with the governments of such countries, we ignore, marginalise or subordinate these principles and only concentrate on trade and diplomacy.

Within the context of an African Renaissance, the ANC and government have correctly placed the Southern African region as a priority in terms of economic co-operation and co-ordination. The defeat of the apartheid regime has created a completely new Southern African situation within which the region can realise its goals of integrated economic development.

South Africa's entry into the Southern African Development Community (SADC) was an important statement of our commitment to these objectives. The past year has seen a

number of steps taken by the region to advance them including most importantly the establishment of the SADC Security Organ, the signing of the SADC trade protocol and the launch of the Maputo corridor programme.

The opposite is also true there can be no meaningful economic development in the Southern African region without such developments inside South Africa itself. The interdependence within the region needs to be fostered and creatively nurtured towards the renewal of the region as a whole.

The reality of cross-border migration from less developed SADC states, to more developed ones, will continue to be a problem for as long as there are no co-ordinated strategies towards effective economic integration. It is important that as a movement we understand the issue of illegal immigrants from the region from this perspective in order not to develop xenophobic attitudes towards illegal immigrants, whilst at the same time developing short-term and long-term measures to deal with this reality.

The Southern African region, and South Africa in particular, is faced with the problem of illegal immigration, drug trafficking and crime syndicates. This is largely as a result of uneven economic development in the region. The space arising out of the transition to a post-apartheid South and Southern Africa is exploited by syndicates (both local and international). Furthermore, in the current international situation there is increase in terrorism, small arms proliferation and environmental degradation. Some of these issues, are presenting enormous problems in the region. There is a need, in particular, to achieve greater co-ordination and to seriously address issues of institutional development and reform (economic and political) with the SADC region in order to empower it deal with these issues. South Africa must use its position as chair of SADC to realise these.

SOME KEY STRATEGIC CHALLENGES AND PRACTICAL TASKS FACING SOUTH AFRICA'S FOREIGN POLICY

In order to achieve the objectives stated above and for South Africa to place itself correctly in the current international situation, there are some key challenges and practical tasks facing us. These include:

- The need to develop strategies and campaign tirelessly to place concerns of Africa and the whole of the developing world more centrally on the international agenda and contest established power relations in a range of international forums. This should lead to the development of alliances with progressive states and parties in the Western World. However, this should be done with awareness that it is not easy to develop and maintain relations with the countries of the developed world who gain from the unequal power relations in the world. At the same time, alliances among weak countries only, without developing strategic alliances with some of the developed countries, is unlikely to achieve the objectives of a just world order. The fact that 13 out of the 15 members of the European Union have governments led by social democratic or labour parties provides an opportunity to campaign for the advancements of some of these goals in Europe. Whilst it is not possible to draw a sharp distinction between trade and politics, our guide in building such alliances should be that these will

- sometimes be based on economic or trade considerations and other times on political considerations.
- Building alliances with some of the countries in the North is unlikely to give the required results unless countries of the developing world themselves are able to create alliances and a common agenda on what is to be done in tackling the new global world order. This should include developing a common agenda in as many areas as possible when approaching the various multi-lateral forums. Concretely this means prioritising the democratisation and expansion of membership of the United Nations Security Council; a common programme and approach towards the poverty alleviation and debt relief for the developing countries; and the democratisation of the operations of institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is within this context that organisations such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) becomes important, thus necessitating a need to re-define its role and re-position itself in the present international context.
- South Africa needs to lead a campaign to transform and empower the OAU and its organs so that it is able to play an effective role in the implementation of an agenda for an African renewal. The challenge here is to enable the OAU to be able to effectively intervene in promoting of democracy, justice and human rights whilst at the same time not undermining the OAU charter, which protects the national sovereignty of African countries. However, this charter should at the same time not be used as a shield for states that violate human rights. The recent 33rd summit of the OAU held in Harare reflects a new mood in Africa's determination to resolve its own problems and create a climate for a renewal. Some of the factors contributing to this include the steady consolidation of South Africa's transition to democracy, as well as the role played by the OAU and South Africa in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Related to the above is the task of strengthening the OAU to act as a forum for co-ordinating healthy economic and political relations among African countries as well as the relationship between Africa and the rest of the world. The OAU needs further strengthening in order to effectively co-ordinate economic relations on a continental basis. This means empowering the OAU to become an agency to roll-back neo-colonialism and be an instrument for an African Renaissance. This further entails effective co-ordination by the OAU of the developing regional economic blocs on the continent.

A crucial issue that needs to be firmly placed in the transformation of the world order is that of gender inequality and the oppression of women in particular. It is a fact that culture and national sovereignty have often been used to maintain regimes of women's oppression and gender inequality. The question of an African Renaissance should centrally be defined by a vision and a commitment to gender equality and the eradication of women's oppression. This means that South Africa, and our movement in particular need to play an important role in these struggles worldwide and on the continent, including specifically the revival of a Pan-African women's movement. There can be no renewal in Africa whilst gender inequality remains firmly entrenched on the continent and globally. However, a key task in this regard is the development of perspectives and approaches to international relations that centrally involves ideas of

gender equality and women's emancipation. The Beijing platform provides a foundation upon which we can build, particularly on the African continent.

In these efforts, we should not overestimate ourselves as a small middle-income country. Neither should we ignore the relative influence we enjoy coming from our widely respected transition to democracy, the strategic location of our region as a whole and the resources and potential it commands. Small as we are, but because of our international image, we are able to "punch above our weight" whilst at the same time ensuring that we act in concert with others.

Since it is inevitable that an African Renaissance and transformation of international relations will necessarily entail the transformation of neo-colonial relations, it is important to realise that the responses of major powers to such an initiative might not be positive. It is thus important to strike a balance between pursuit of an African renewal and gathering enough strength in order to defend whatever advances we make, and, most importantly, not to act in a childish manner.

PARTY TO PARTY RELATIONS

If all the above objectives are to be realised, the ANC has to position itself in particular ways in the new international situation. The ANC, from its long and successful struggle against apartheid at an international level, carries within it a wealth of experience in terms of lobbying and mobilising around the transformation of the current world order and towards an African Renaissance. However, we cannot mechanically transfer this experience onto the current international situation without identifying new priorities for the ANC as an organisation.

It is argued here that relations between parties on an international level still remains an important vehicle to attain some of our objectives in the international arena. Strengthening party to party relations requires that we take into account the following factors and issues:

- Government to government relations alone are not adequate in terms of attaining our international objectives. Building relations with progressive and democratic parties throughout the world still remains an important tool to support government to government relations.
- We must prioritise the SADC region and the continent as a whole and this requires the strengthening of party-to-party relations with progressive parties in the region and the continent. Our priority in this regard should be towards our former allies in the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, though not excluding issue-based alliances with a wide range of other forces.
- The ANC and government needs to clearly distinguish between our strategic partners and trade partners, though trade and politics are highly integrated in the current international environment. Strategic partners are those with whom a long-term relationship could be developed around key issues. A trade partner might be of strategic importance on matters relating to trade but not necessarily in relation to some broader political objectives of engaging the new world order. Such a distinction should also act to inform the ANC's priorities in forging party-to-party relations.

In an international period where governments' autonomy is under threat, where there is deepening interdependence, and where issues are not always territorially defined, the centrality of party-to-party relations cannot be overemphasised in international relations. The need to build people-to-people relations outside of state-to-state relations is also important. The ANC's party-to-party relations should also facilitate contact at the level of mass formations, around a range of issues like gender relations, environment, peace and other sectoral non-governmental issues. In order to realise our objectives of developing strategic party-to-party relations, there needs to be a closer working relationship between ANC structures and government structures on matters of international policy. This also requires that debate and discussion on international policy be expanded to cover our entire organisation, the tripartite alliance and the broad democratic movement.

Much more importantly, never in the history of the struggles of the African people, and people of the South in general have we needed solidarity based on forging a common agenda around the strategic objective of achieving an equitable world order. But what does solidarity entail? Solidarity entails strengthening bonds for action even in instances where they seem not to be of immediate benefit to "national interest". Such solidarity is based on a longer term strategy that is, in fact, in the national interest. In realising our international objectives requires alliances that might have immediate benefit and those that are not immediate. Therefore, the ANC as a political movement, has a critical role to play in cementing solidarity amongst the progressive forces in the world based on the principles of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism and a democratic world order.

CONCLUSION

These objectives should not only inform party-to-party relations but should also inform our goals in the transformation of state structures in general and the Department of Foreign Affairs in particular.