

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

**ANC POLICY GUIDELINES FOR
A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA**

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(FOR INTERNAL DISCUSSION ONLY)

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INTRODUCTION

The basic objectives of ANC policy are threefold:

- * To overcome the legacy of inequality and injustice created by colonialism and apartheid, in a swift, progressive and principled way;
- * To develop an economy and state infrastructure that will progressively improve the quality of life of all South Africans; and,
- * To encourage the flourishing of the feeling that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, to promote a common loyalty to and pride in the country and to create a universal sense of freedom and security within its borders.

These are not mutually exclusive goals. On the contrary, the future of our country depends on the harmonious and simultaneous realisation of all three. The advancement of the majority of people will, in the medium-and-long-term, release hitherto untapped and suppressed talents and energies that will both boost and diversify the economy. Developing the economy will, in turn, provide the basis for overcoming the divisions of the past without creating new ones. Finally, the achievement of a genuine sense of national unity depends on all of us working together to overcome the inequalities created by apartheid.

The beacons guiding these advances are equal rights, non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy and mutual respect. A broad, inclusive approach, free of arrogance or complexes of superiority or inferiority, is fundamental.

We have to develop a truly South African vision of our country, one undistorted by the prejudices and sectarianism that has guided viewpoints on race and gender, in the past. We have to rely on the wisdom, life experiences, talents and know-how of all South Africans, men and women. There can be no apartheid in finding solutions to the problems created by apartheid.

This document does not present a rigid ANC blue-print for the future of South Africa, to which our supporters will be expected to rally and our opponents required to submit. Rather, the document represents a set of basic guidelines to policies we intend to pursue. These ideas will be developed through discussion within the ANC, and through consultation with the broadest spectrum of South African public opinion. The policies will be adapted according to these processes and on the basis of experience.

Our problems run deep

It is necessary to dwell on the problems which will be faced by the first government which is elected under a new democratic constitution. It will help create an understanding of the

magnitude of the tasks involved in transforming our country into one where everyone can enjoy a reasonable standard of living combined with peace and security. It will underline the fact that there are choices to be made and priorities to be established.

The nationalist government has pursued active political and social policies which, amongst others things, have led to: extreme levels of poverty and disease in the rural areas; the creation of urban ghettos where people have been denied access to even the most basic means of survival as a result of severely limited access to decent homes, electricity, water-borne sewerage, tarred roads, and recreational facilities; an education system preparing the majority of South Africans for lives of subordination and low income wage jobs; a social security system geared almost entirely to fulfilling the needs of the white minority; a health system that has seriously neglected the well-being of most South Africans; the social and political marginalisation of the majority of people, the African community in particular, their exclusion from public life and decision making as well as the denial of their culture.

Gender discrimination has either excluded or subordinated the nature of women's participation in all socio-economic and political institutions. Combined with apartheid, this has resulted in African women being the most exploited and poverty stricken section of the South African population.

Both the political system of apartheid and the pattern of economic development in our country, have been responsible for these developments. The white minority have used their exclusive access to political and economic power to promote their own sectional interests at the expense of black people and the country's natural resources. Black people have been systematically excluded and disadvantaged economically with the result that South Africa has one of the most unequal patterns of income and wealth distribution in the world.

Since the mid-1970s, the South african economy has stagnated. An average growth rate of 6% in the 1960s declined to 3% in the 1970s and is now below 1%. Unemployment is estimated at over 40% of the economically active population.

For over forty years, economic strategy was based on expanding industry through the substitution of hitherto imported manufactured goods for the wealthy minority. There has also been an emphasis on strategic industries such as arms and petrochemicals. This led to the emergence of a significant manufacturing sector in our country, but one which is generally uncompetitive in terms of international costs and prices.

The alienation of land from the indigenous people and the denial of the African majority's rights to land and political power in our country are intimately connected. The agricultural sector in South Africa is currently experiencing a deep crisis. Debt levels of white farmers have reached R14 billion.

These problems have led to rapidly increasing unemployment and a serious decline in living standards.

Our people remain divided. We do not know each other. We are prevented from developing a national vision, in terms of which, we would see our country through the eyes of all its citizens, and not just one group or another. We live apart, physically separated, spiritually alienated, frightened of getting too close, knowing that we have different life-chances and different views of what change means. We are ruled by a multiplicity of fragmented departments, boards, councils and ministries. Apartheid has left us apart.

Policies for transformation

In this context it is vital that the ANC develops a clear response. This response must be aimed both at establishing a new and democratic political dispensation that replaces the racist and undemocratic apartheid constitution and addresses the legacy of apartheid in the broader socio-economic sphere.

This document is a direct response to the above challenges. It sets out for discussion a comprehensive set of guidelines highlighting the ANC's broad policy response to all the major areas of political, social and economic life. The document is structured so as to highlight the strong relationship between the creation of political democracy and social and economic transformation.

It is critical, however, that we honestly face up to the extent of the problems confronting our country. They are not going to be solved overnight and there are no easy or quick solutions. The problems run deep and resources are limited. Accordingly, the policies proposed here represent our broad vision. These policies highlight our ultimate goals, which will need to be transformed into effective and realisable programmes in the short-term.

In other words, we will need to establish priorities both within each of the different policy areas and between these broad areas. These priorities must be arrived at through democratic discussions and decision making processes and we must establish just and efficient mechanisms for implementing these decisions. Progress will also depend on involving as many sections of our society as possible in finding solutions.