

Programme Director,

Esteemed Members of the Luthuli Museum Council,

Comrades, ladies and gentlemen:

First of all, I thank the Council of the Luthuli Museum for giving me the opportunity to deliver a Lecture in honour of that eminent leader of our people, Chief Albert Luthuli, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of his receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize.

I say this because I sincerely believe that nobody would ever be entitled to use Albert Luthuli's name in vain. We must recall his name and his memory because we commit ourselves to honour his legacy by doing everything we can to respect it by our deeds.

Chief Luthuli deliberately bound us to the cause for which he received the Nobel Peace Prize when in his Acceptance Speech in Oslo, Norway, in December 1961, he dedicated the Award in these words:

"I therefore regard this award as a recognition of the sacrifice made by many of all races, particularly the African people, who have endured and suffered so much for so long. It can only be on behalf of the people of South Africa, all the people of South Africa, especially the freedom-loving people, that I accept this award, that I acknowledge this honour. I accept it also as an honour not only to South Africa, but for the whole continent of Africa, to this continent, Mother Africa!"

The Nobel Peace Laureate went on to say:

"For my part, I am deeply conscious of the added responsibility which this award entails. I have the feeling that I have been made answerable for the future of the people of South Africa, for if there is no peace for the majority of them there can be no peace for any one...Happily, I am one among millions who have dedicated their lives to the service of mankind, who have given time, property and life to ensure that all men shall live in peace and happiness, and I like to here say, that there are many in my country who are doing so."

Chief Luthuli passed away in suspect circumstances 54 years ago and 27 years before that historic moment, the birth of a democratic South Africa in 1994. Accordingly and very regrettably, he did not live long enough to celebrate both the achievement of the very goal for which he had been honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize and the building of the South Africa and Africa he had spoken about in Oslo.

I believe that those of us to whom Chief Luthuli dedicated the Nobel Peace Prize - who belong among those he described as 'millions who have dedicated their lives to the service of mankind' - and who lived to see the new South Africa being born need to pose and answer the important questions - is everything that has happened in South Africa and the rest of Africa consonant with what Chief Luthuli sacrificed for and what have been and are our responsibilities in this regard?

In this context I would like to draw the attention especially of members and supporters of his beloved Movement he led so brilliantly, the African National Congress, to what Chief Luthuli thought about the responsibilities of the leaders and cadres of his Movement.

As all of us will remember, Chief Luthuli burnt his Pass, the so-called Reference Book, in 1960 as part of that year's Anti-Pass Campaign. Like many others, he was charged, found guilty and given a suspended sentence. He prepared a speech he intended to deliver in Court but did not get the opportunity to do so. Here is part of what he would have said, to which I believe ANC members in particular should pay special attention:

“There comes a time...when a leader must give as practical a demonstration of his convictions and willingness to live up to the demands of the cause, as he expects of his people. (When I burnt the Pass) I felt that was the hour in our history, and in my life, for this demonstration. I am not sorry nor ashamed of what I did. I could not have done less than I did and still live with my conscience. I would rightly lose the confidence of my people, and earn the disrespect of right-thinking people in my country and in the world, and the disdain of posterity.”

Before I proceed further, I would like to commend the Luthuli Museum Council for having taken the decision to have the Chief Albert Luthuli Lectures delivered on December 10, International Human Rights Day.

As we all know, the United Nations General Assembly took the decision in 1950 to proclaim this Day to honour that vitally important instrument of International Law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which the UN had adopted in 1948.

When the then Chairperson of the Nobel Committee, Gunnar Jahn, made his Presentation Speech at Chief Luthuli's Award Ceremony, he mentioned that the Committee had awarded the Prize for 1961 to Dag Hammarskjöld, the former UN Secretary General, posthumously. In this context he said:

“Luthuli's activities have been, and are, confined to his own country, while Dag Hammarskjöld worked in the international sphere. Yet despite these differences, they had one thing in common: both fought to implant the idea of justice in the individual, in the nation, and among the nations; or we might put it like this: they fought for the ideals expressed in the declaration of human rights embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

“Albert John Luthuli's fight has been waged within the borders of his own country; but the issues raised go far beyond them. He brings a message to all who work and strive to establish respect for human rights both within nations and between nations.”

It is therefore important that we take note of the fact that even the Nobel Committee openly recognised and acknowledged the relevance of the struggle to defeat the apartheid crime against humanity to the human rights situation globally.

Again as we all know, Chief Luthuli himself had chosen to include in his Nobel Lecture important observations about what he called Mother Africa, our Continent, rather than focus narrowly and solely on South Africa – hence the decision of the Luthuli Museum Council that the theme of our Lecture should be ‘Africa and Freedom’, which was Chief Luthuli’s own title for his Lecture.

In that Lecture he placed Africa on a very high pedestal saying:

“This is Africa’s age – the dawn of her fulfilment, yes, the moment when she must grapple with destiny to reach the summits of sublimity...

“Though robbed of her lands, her independence, and opportunities...should she not see her destiny as being that of making a distinctive contribution to human progress and human relationships with a peculiar new Africa flavour enriched by the diversity of cultures she enjoys, thus building on the summits of present human achievement an edifice that would be one of the finest tributes to the genius of man?...

“Africa’s qualification for this noble task is incontestable, for her own fight has never been and is not now a fight for conquest of land, for accumulation of wealth or domination of peoples, but for the recognition and preservation of the rights of man and the establishment of a truly free world for a free people.”

I am certain that as many of us hear these words, we are reminded of what one of the founders of the ANC, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, said in 1906 about Africa’s place in the world, 55 years before Chief Luthuli’s Nobel Lecture.

I refer here to Seme’s well-known Speech which he entitled ‘The Regeneration of Africa’ during which he said:

“The regeneration of Africa means that a new and unique civilisation is soon to be added to the world. The African is not a proletarian in the world of science and art...The most essential departure of this new civilisation is that it shall be thoroughly spiritual and humanistic - indeed a regeneration moral and eternal!”

The recognition that Africa shares a common destiny and that it is endowed with exemplary resilience, as stated by Chief Luthuli and Pixley Seme, goes back to our earlier patriots in the 19th century such as the great pathfinder, Rev Tiyo Soga.

In an article published in 1865, even before the anti-African 1884/1885 Berlin Conference which apportioned various parts of Africa to the various European colonisers, Rev Soga said:

“Africa was of God given to the race of Ham. I find the Negro from the days of the old Assyrians downwards, keeping his 'individuality' and 'distinctiveness' amid the wreck of empires, and the revolution of ages. I find him keeping his place among the nations, and keeping his home and country...

“I find the negro in the present struggle in America looking forward - though still with chains in his hands and with chains on his feet - yet looking forward to the dawn of a better day for himself and all his sable brethren in Africa.”

I would like to believe that all of us will not be surprised that other outstanding leaders of our people, such as Anton Lembede, the first President of the ANC Youth League and Stephen Bantu Biko, leader of the Black Consciousness Movement, also followed in the footsteps of the leaders I have mentioned with regard to the important matter of the future of Africa.

Anton Lembede said: “My heart yearns for the glory of an Africa that is gone. But I shall labour for the birth of a new Africa, free and great among the nations of the world”.

For his part, Steve Biko said: “The great powers of the world may have done wonders in giving the world an industrial and military look but the great gift still has to come from Africa – giving the world a more human face.”

During his Nobel Lecture Chief Luthuli pointed to the direct connection between the liberation of South Africa from apartheid white minority rule, and Africa achieving the unique status which he described as reaching ‘the summits of sublimity’. He said:

“Whatever may be the future of our freedom efforts, our cause is the cause of the liberation of people who are denied freedom. Only on this basis can the peace of Africa and the world be firmly founded. Our cause is the cause of equality between nations and peoples. Only thus can the brotherhood of man be firmly established.”

In this context, Chief Luthuli reaffirmed an ANC commitment to struggle until victory is achieved which he had made five years earlier in 1956, when he was responding to attacks against the ANC made by Jordan Ngubane of the Liberal Party.

He had said:

“The African National Congress knows where it is going...The African National Congress on the basis of its Programme of Action will strive to attain the ideals enshrined in the Freedom Charter with a full sense of responsibility to the African people and their aspirations. The African National Congress will carry on the programme of African liberation and freedom for all to the best of its ability...”

I would like to point to two important conclusions from what I have just said:

- one is that Chief Luthuli drew attention to the fact that the liberation of South Africa was an integral part of, and would make an important contribution to the development of the Africa he and others like Pixley Seme and Steve Biko had spoken of; and,
- the other is that the Pan Africanist perspective for the reconstruction and development of our Continent and the aspiration that it plays its unique and rightful role in global affairs is, to use a popular colloquialism, part of the very DNA of the South African liberation movement.

Bearing in mind the tasks especially of Chief Luthuli’s organisation, the African National Congress, two questions arise from these two conclusions. These are:

- where are we with regard to tasks of the liberation movement towards South Africa as spelt out by Chief Luthuli; and,
- and where are we with regard to the achievement of the vision for Africa advanced by Chief Luthuli?

I believe that it is self-evident that for the ANC to remain loyal to the commitment Chief Luthuli made that it would “carry on the programme of African liberation and freedom for all to the best of its ability...” it would have to retain its character as a true servant of the people.

This matter is central to everything I would like to say in this Lecture. To address it – meaning the state of the ANC – I thought it best that the ANC should speak for itself.

I plead that even those among us who believe that they know what the ANC has said about itself should try to listen with a fresh ear because they too will have to help answer the questions – what else should be said and what should be done about this critical and strategic matter – the state of the ANC!

When Nelson Mandela presented his Political report at the 1997 50th National Conference of the ANC he said:

“A number of negative features within the ANC and the broad democratic movement have emerged during the last three years. We have an inescapable responsibility to attend to these matters frankly and decisively in defence of both our movement and our revolution.

“One of these negative features is the emergence of careerism within our ranks. Many among our members see their membership of the ANC as a means to advance their personal ambitions to attain positions of power and access to resources for their own individual gratification.

“In reality, during the last three years, we have found it difficult to deal with such careerists in a decisive manner...

“During this period, we have also been faced with various instances of corruption involving our own members, including those who occupy positions of authority by virtue of the victory of the democratic revolution.

“Clearly, we have to take all necessary measures to purge ourselves of such members and organise ourselves in a way that will make it difficult for corrupt elements to gain entry into our movement.”

At the ANC National General Council in 2000, speaking as President, I said:

“The (fact of the) two features of the ANC, as a mass movement for social change and a governing party has produced a result with which we must contend and which Comrade Nelson Mandela dealt with when he presented the Political Report at our last National Conference.

“The result I am talking about is that we have attracted into and continue to retain opportunists and careerists within our ranks.

“These are the people who join the movement not because they respect or support any of the strategic objectives (of our Movement).

“They join with the great ease that our procedures as a mass movement permit, with the sole aim of furthering their personal careers and using the access to state power we have as a ruling party, to enrich themselves.

“Another matter which Nelson Mandela addressed when he spoke in Mafikeng was the need for us, as part of our revolutionary duty, to work to change the social morality in our society.

“I am certain that many among us followed the media as the former captain of our national cricket team, the Proteas, Hansie Cronje, gave evidence at the King Commission.

“One of the most outstanding things about the evidence that Hansie Cronje gave was how vividly it illustrated the point Nelson Mandela made about the dominance in our society of a value system based on the pursuit of personal wealth, at all costs...

‘We must therefore expect that some will, indeed, see membership of the ANC as a vehicle facilitating their access to personal wealth, an overriding value they would have learnt from the society in which they grew up and in which they live...

“An important part of our struggle for Africa`s renaissance is the struggle against corruption...

“Our experience in the last six years tells us that there is absolutely no reason why we should assume that we ourselves stand no danger of becoming victim to the widespread corruption we have seen in other countries in Africa and elsewhere in the world.

“As an agent for change in our own country and frontline fighters against corruption in our society, we must guard against the latter two tendencies - the corruption of the ANC itself and the demobilisation of the masses of our people.”

Later I also said:

"Because leadership in structures of the ANC affords opportunities to assume positions of authority in government, some individuals then compete for ANC leadership positions in order to get into government.

“Thus resources, prestige and authority of government positions become the driving force in competition for leadership positions in the ANC...

“There are people who, while holding ANC membership cards, do not belong to the ANC but belong to those who paid their subscriptions.

“This includes unqualified people who get appointed to such positions as Municipal Managers, placemen and women who serve as the pliable tools of their political masters, and who are used to advance the commercial and political interests of their handlers and patrons...”

Already at the 1997 Conference, the SG had said:

”As in the past, the ANC`s capacity to transform South Africa is dependent on the quality of its cadres...

Agreeing with the SG but speaking at the 2007 ANC Conference I said:

“I am certain that all those of us who have followed the evolution of the political situation in our country and movement over the last five years will have no hesitation in agreeing that the single and most strategic task we face is to strengthen the ANC both quantitatively and qualitatively to the point of understanding and accepting the proposition - better fewer, but better!”

A full decade after these President's remarks at the 2007 Polokwane ANC Conference, the Secretary General said in his Diagnostic Report at the 2017 ANC Policy Conference:

“We owe it to ourselves first, the movement and society, to analyse in detail the implications of a liberation movement that has ascended to power and, therefore, controls huge resources. Being in power is rapidly becoming a source of political bankruptcy, in that members of the ANC fight for deployment either as councillors, MPLs and MPs – respectively, as if there is ‘no tomorrow’...It is foreign to our movement for comrades to see deployment as a source of material benefit rather than the reason to serve the people.”

At the Policy Conference a decade earlier in 2007 I had said:

“I trust that all of us gave ourselves time to study and respond to the Discussion Document, “Towards the Centenary of the ANC: A Strategic Agenda for Organisational Renewal.”

“The Document concludes with the words:

“Our movement has a track record of being a trusted leader and loyal servant people. Its strength lies in its ability to renew itself ideologically and organisationally, to take account of new developments and new challenges...”

“Any organisational review and renewal proposals for the ANC have to pass one test: to what extent do they enhance the capacity of the movement to remain a trusted leader, loyal servant of the people and an agent for change! This is the main challenge.”

The 2017 54th National Conference of the ANC returned to this matter and said:

“Chief among the (challenges raised at the 5th Policy Conference), also highlighted in Strategy and Tactics and the Organisational Discussion Documents, are:

“(a) a loss of confidence in the ANC because of social distance, corruption, nepotism, arrogance, elitism, factionalism, manipulating organisational processes, abusing state power, putting self- interest above the people. Even the strongest ANC supporters agree the “sins of incumbency” are deeply entrenched. Many organisations and thought leaders have become critics of the ANC and its leadership...The movement as a whole is judged as being part of the problem.

“(b) leadership weaknesses and loss of integrity, characterised by competition to control state resources, factionalism, conflict, ill-discipline and disunity, and the use of state institutions to settle differences. Slates and vote buying has delivered leaders who have difficulty driving our programmes or commanding respect from society and our supporters...

“It is these factors that caused the decline in credibility and support for the ANC. The losses of 2016 Local Government Elections were a direct result of these factors. Unless we arrest them in 2017, we will speed up the decline and will face a real threat of losing power in a number of provinces, and more cities and towns.”

The Conference took the critically important decision that:

“Organisational renewal therefore is an absolute and urgent priority, and we may go as far as to say, to the survival of our great movement.”

In this context we must recall that even later than this, in August last year, ANC President Ramaphosa wrote a letter to ANC members in which he said:

“As the inheritors of the legacy of Luthuli, Tambo and Mandela, we must be honest with our people and ourselves. We must acknowledge that our movement, the African National Congress, has been and remains deeply implicated in South Africa's corruption problem...Today, the ANC and its leaders stand accused of corruption.

“The ANC may not stand alone in the dock, but it does stand as Accused No. 1. This is the stark reality that we must now confront...Those who see the ANC as a path to wealth, to power, to influence or status must know that they do not belong in our movement. They must change their ways or they must leave.”

Before I comment on the important matter of the organisational renewal of the ANC, I would like to comment on the matter raised in the resolution of the 54th Conference of loss of electoral support by the ANC.

With regard to the National Assembly Elections, the ANC got 69.69% of the votes in 2004; in 2009 65.90%; in 2014 62.15%; and in 2019 57.50%.

This means that the ANC lost 12.19% of national electoral support during the four national elections during the period 2004 to 2019 inclusive. Thus, on average it lost 3% support on each election.

Concerning the Local Government Elections, the ANC took 66.3% of the vote in 2006; 62% in 2011; 55.65% in 2016; and 47.52% in 2021.

This means that the ANC lost 18.8% of local electoral support during the four local government elections during the period 2006 to 2021 inclusive. This means that on average it lost 4.7% support on each election.

The continuous degradation in the quality of the membership of the ANC emphasised at all ANC conferences for the two decades between 1997 and 2017 contributed directly to this sustained loss of electoral support by the ANC.

We must add to this the important matter of what has happened to the standard of living and quality of life of the people, especially the working masses, especially given that the ANC has campaigned on the promise of 'a better life for all' in all the Elections since 1994.

For many years, with the ANC being the governing party, we have seen a stubbornly high and increasing level of unemployment, impacting mainly exactly on the working people who should benefit most from democratic rule.

The Fourth Quarter unemployment rates for various years are as follows:

In 2008 it was 21.5%, 24.5% in 2012, 26.5% in 2016, 27.1% in 2018 and 34.9% in the Third Quarter this year, 2021.

We therefore see that this unemployment rate has grown by 13.4% in the 13 years between 2008 and 2021. This means that the millions of the unemployed have continued to grow in number whatever and despite the efforts of the successive ANC governments.

As we would expect, these ever-increasing unemployment rates reflect an economy in crisis. I will cite a few economic growth rate statistics during the period between 2008 and 2020.

The growth rate was 3.19% in 2008, down by 2.17% from the previous year. Five years later in 2013 it was 2.49%. Five years later again, in 2018, it was 0.79%. In 2020 the growth rate was

-6.96% down by 7.71% from 2019.

In reality these figures speak of a stagnating economy incapable of creating the required jobs, bearing in mind the numbers of job seekers who enter the job market every year. Therefore they speak of the growing impoverishment of millions of our people.

We should also briefly mention the important matter of the distribution of wealth in our country. Once again, here the story is also not good.

A report published only four months ago by the World Inequality Lab says:

“Attempts by the now-democratic government (of South Africa) to wipe away the legacy of apartheid and colonialism have failed to narrow the imbalance between rich and poor...”

That imbalance is reflected in these figures in the 2021 Global Wealth Report of the financial group Credit Suisse that South Africa’s richest 1% currently holds about 41% of the country’s total wealth, an increase from 35% recorded in 2019.

Credit Suisse says that 1% amounts to 376,000 people out of our population of 60 million.

The Report says: “Globally, the broad category of wealth that represents the middle class is the \$10,000 to \$100,000 range. Only 20.2% of South Africans currently fall into this category, down significantly from 32.2% in 2019.”

Credit Suisse also says that 90% of the population controls only 20% of our country’s wealth and that while the top 1% grows richer the country grows poorer as the population increases while the economy stagnates.

Given the continuing apartheid legacy, we all know what this Report about wealth distribution means in the context of the entrenched racial and gender decisions in our country.

We also remember that the Report talks of a reality presided over by the ANC as the governing party.

When the British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, addressed the apartheid Parliament in February 1960 he said:

“We have seen the awakening of national consciousness in peoples who have for centuries lived in dependence upon some other power...Today the same thing is happening in Africa, and the most striking of all the impressions I have formed since I left London a month ago is of the strength of this African national consciousness...The wind of change is blowing through this continent...”

When Chief Luthuli delivered the Nobel Lecture a year later and said “But now, the revolutionary stirrings of our Continent are setting the past aside. This is Africa’s age...” and dreamed of an Africa which would “reach the summits of sublimity...” he was talking of the fruit of the wind of change which PM Macmillan had spoken of.

Of course he could not have known that for many years after the majority of our countries had gained independence, they would fall victim to much conflict and instability.

I am talking here of the great number of military coups and rule by military governments and conflicts within States, such as the wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia. I speak of wars such the Biafra war in Nigeria, the war between Ethiopia and Somalia and the war between Libya and Chad. I speak also of one-party states especially those like Mobutu’s Zaire, which were merely as a cover for dictatorship.

We also saw evidence of the abuse of state power for self-enrichment as well as the entrenchment of corruption. Mobutu and his Zaire were outstanding exemplars of this malpractice but not the only ones on our Continent.

Similarly, nothing was happening to improve the material lives of the masses of the African people. Indeed, the figures suggested that many of our countries were experiencing growing impoverishment.

Of course, until 1990, Africa continued to be confronted by a very stubborn apartheid tyranny which refused to bend to the wind of change which PM Macmillan spoke about in 1960 directly addressing the captains of racist domination in their own legislative chamber.

Even after our own liberation, the situation in Africa looked so bleak to some in the world that on May 13 2000, the influential British magazine, The Economist, published an editorial under the heading – Hopeless Africa – with the words ‘Africa. The Hopeless Continent’ blazoned on its cover page.

The Editorial said: "The new millennium has brought more disaster than hope to Africa. Worse, the few candles of hope are flickering weakly."

And yet for some years already, Africa had embarked on its own turnaround strategy. This had begun with the process of democratisation which swept through many African countries during the 1990s.

This was to be followed by such important initiatives as the formation of the AU to succeed the OAU, the adoption of such programmes as NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism. And then, for many years, Africa achieved sustained high economic growth rates, with a number of African countries achieving some of the highest growth rates in the world.

This time, on December 3 2011, the magazine, The Economist, designated Africa 'The hopeful continent' and published an Editorial headed 'Africa rising'. Among others it said:

"After decades of slow growth, Africa has a real chance to follow in the footsteps of Asia...Autocracy, corruption and strife will not disappear overnight. But at a dark time for the world economy, Africa's progress is a reminder of the transformative promise of growth."

Regardless of what 'The Economist' thought or said about Africa, our Continent had taken its own steps to move towards the kind of Mother Africa which Chief Luthuli had spoken about.

The question was whether Mother Africa would be able to sustain the new path it had chosen, set to play the role globally which Chief Luthuli spoke about in his Nobel Lecture.

In this regard, many things have happened which are a cause of worry.

In 2002 the developed countries organised in the G8 adopted their G8 Africa Action Plan in which they undertook to align their economic relations with our Continent on the basis of Africa's own programme, NEPAD.

This was a major step forward towards constructing equitable relations between our Continent and the developed countries, with some of them being our former colonisers.

However, by 2010, eight years later, the G8 had walked away from the G8 Africa Action Plan.

The following year, 2011, the UN Security Council effectively authorised NATO to commit an act of aggression to achieve regime change in Libya by removing the Head of State, Colonel Gaddafi. This was directly contrary to a decision of the AU Peace and Security Council which had called for a negotiated resolution of the conflict in Libya, a process in which it was engaged.

The NATO intervention not only resulted in the wilful murder of Colonel Gaddafi but also destroyed the Libyan State. This condemned both Libya and the Sahel region to sustained armed conflicts which continue to this day.

In 2017 the African Heads of State and Government took the decision to 'Silence the Gun by 2020'. This was a brave decision finally to end the armed conflicts on our Continent. Unfortunately this has not been achieved.

But of great concern in this regard is that a new war in Africa broke out in Ethiopia in November 2020, almost exactly as the Continent was approaching the deadline for the campaign to Silence the Guns.

Coming on top of the immense suffering and destruction this war has caused, particularly in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, one of the tragedies of this conflict is that 10 months after the war had started, the AU Peace and Security Council had not addressed it. This is despite its express mandate to intervene to ensure peace and stability in all the Member States of the AU as well as the fact that Ethiopia hosts the Headquarters of the AU.

I am citing these three instances of the abandonment of the G8 Africa Action Plan, the wilful destruction of the Libyan state and the paralysis of the AU in the face of an active threat to international peace and security, to underline the point that Africa is moving further away from its noble role as visualised by Chief Luthuli in his important Nobel Lecture.

As we celebrate the eminent leader Chief Albert Luthuli today, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the award to him of the Nobel Peace Prize, I believe that there are at least three major challenges to address which would also practically confirm our claimed loyalty to his legacy.

These tasks are:

- to do everything possible urgently to effect the renewal of the ANC;
- to act without delay to ensure that there is a sustained effort to achieve high economic growth rates and the sustained development of the economy; and,
- to contribute everything we can to the renaissance of Africa.

Naturally the matter of the renewal of the ANC is fully the responsibility of this organisation of Chief Luthuli, which must implement what is after all a directive issuing from its 54th National Conference. Because it is the governing party, the ANC owes the whole country this renewal.

Without this renewal, it will be impossible effectively to deal with the scourge of corruption. Without this renewal, it would not be possible to build the capable state which is vital not only for service delivery but also to achieve the required economic growth rates as well as significantly improve the safety and security of the population at large.

The challenges of high levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality stare us in the face, contrary to what Chief Luthuli expressly said was an intolerable result of the colonial and apartheid systems.

Fortunately, for the first time since 1994, all our country's four social partners are fully in agreement that they must work together to elaborate and implement an Economic Reconstruction, Recovery and Growth Plan which must address the three socio-economic challenges I have mentioned.

These social partners, led by Government, must act with the greatest urgency to implement their shared commitment. All their leaders must not forget that they are accountable to the nation as a whole and must keep the public regularly informed about what they are doing with regard to the commitment I have mentioned.

As I have said, in his Nobel Lecture, Freedom and Africa, Chief Luthuli linked directly our freedom to his vision of an Africa which in his words, would 'make a distinctive contribution to human progress and human relationships with a peculiar new Africa flavour enriched by the diversity of cultures she enjoys.'

In an article in the Daily Maverick only three days ago, entitled 'To be a force for good in the world, we must strengthen democracy in South Africa', the former Deputy Finance Minister, Mcebisi Jonas, drew attention to the matter of the relations between our country and the rest of Africa and the world.

Among other things he says:

"Geography and history has decided that South Africa will be a player, whether we like it or not...There is no question that the route to our unique place in the world goes through Africa.

"The best way to do that is to strengthen African economies and institutions and to forge a new solidarity across the continent...

"The goal should be simple: to promote economic growth and development, good governance, poverty alleviation and human security. The continent is stronger when it is united and when South Africa plays a leadership role."

Obviously we do not have to agree with all the formulations in these comments by Mr Jonas. However they are important to the extent that they help to draw attention to the Pan Africanist obligations the South African liberation movement has towards its own Continent, consistent with its long established being and identity.

As I have said, we must make our contribution to the unity and renaissance of Africa.

Before I close, I must mention that this month some among us will also celebrate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the liberation army, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). It is important that its very first founding unit is called 'The Luthuli Detachment'.

Chief Luthuli was very committed to the concept and practice of non-violent struggle precisely because he was deeply committed to the need to protect human life.

He issued a Statement on June 12 1964 after the Rivonia accused had been sentenced to life imprisonment and said:

"The African National Congress, with allied organisations representing all racial sections, sought every possible means of redress for intolerable conditions, and held consistently to a policy of using militant, non-violent means of struggle...But finally all avenues of resistance were closed...

"The African National Congress never abandoned its method of a militant, nonviolent struggle, and of creating in the process a spirit of militancy in the people. However, in the face of the uncompromising white refusal to abandon a policy which denies the African and other oppressed South Africans their rightful heritage - freedom - no one can blame brave just men for seeking justice by the use of violent methods; nor could they be blamed if they tried to create an organised force in order to ultimately establish peace and racial harmony...

"They represent the highest in morality and ethics in the South African political struggle...They believe profoundly in justice and reason; when they are locked away, justice and reason will have departed from the South African scene."

In these comments Chief Luthuli spelt out the outlook and practice which were binding on MK. The founding detachment was name after him precisely as a commitment to the vision he espoused about those who had been forced, in his words, to seek justice by the use of violent methods.

Those who convene to celebrate the 60th anniversary of MK should not omit to communicate this distinguishing feature of the liberation army conveyed by Chief Luthuli, including the fact that it was but

one strand in a four-pronged offensive which included the non-violent mass struggle which Chief Luthuli correctly said the ANC never abandoned.

As we mark the 60th anniversary of the very first award of the Nobel Peace Prize to an African, Chief Luthuli, as well as salute him, proclaiming correctly that his spirit lives on, we must recall his words that:

“There comes a time...when a leader must give a practical demonstration of his or her convictions and willingness to live up to the demands of the cause, (knowing that for anybody to betray the people’s expectations means) rightly to lose the confidence of the people, and earn the disrespect of right-thinking people in the country and in the world, and the disdain of posterity.”

We owe it to the present and future generations that we honour our eminent leader and Nobel Laureate, Chief Albert Luthuli, and pledge to respect his legacy through practical deeds.

Thank you for your attention.