

ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA AT THE LAUNCH OF THE 2019  
ELECTIONS MANIFESTO AND THE ANC 107TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

MOSES MABHIDA STADIUM  
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Deputy President David Mabuza,  
National Officials of the African National Congress,  
Members of the ANC National Executive Committee,  
Leaders of the ANC Women's League, Veterans League and Youth League,  
Leaders of the SACP, COSATU and SANCO,  
Representatives of fraternal parties,  
Comrades and Friends,  
Fellow South Africans,

We gather here today to celebrate the 107th anniversary of the formation of the African National Congress.

We have come here to KwaZulu-Natal, the birthplace of the first President-General of the ANC and the home of so many gallant freedom fighters, to recall the heroic struggle of the South African people to be free.

We have come here on the 140th anniversary of the Battle of Isandlwana to honour those who resisted the dispossession and subjugation of the people of this land.

We have come here on the 125th anniversary of the formation of the Natal Indian Congress to reaffirm the strength of united action and our undying commitment to a non-racial South Africa.

We remember these moments in our history because they describe who we are as a movement and as a people.

These moments have moulded our identity, formed our values, our principles and our aspirations.

They remind us that we are on a long and arduous journey from a past of division and despair into a future of justice and equality.

They remind us of the responsibility we all share to complete that journey, no matter how difficult, no matter how perilous.

This year we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the achievement of democracy.

We celebrate 25 years of freedom.

We celebrate the fact that South Africa is today a better place, a nation united in its diversity, working together to overcome the injustices of its past.

It is a nation founded on a democratic and progressive Constitution that guarantees equal rights to all people.

It is a nation with strong and durable democratic institutions, an independent judiciary, a free media and an active civil society.

Over the last 25 years, working together, we have given substance to the promise of a better life for all.

Millions of poor South Africans have benefited from the provision of free houses, the restitution of land and the provision of electricity, water and sanitation.

We have transformed the future of millions of young people by massively expanding enrolment in schools, universities, colleges and early childhood development.

We have expanded access to health care, increased average life expectancy, reduced maternal mortality and turned the tide of the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

Our economy has tripled in size since 1994 and over 7 million more South Africans have jobs.

Yet, despite these remarkable achievements, many of our people live in desperate hardship, without appropriate skills, work or opportunities to improve their lot.

Even as we celebrate the great benefits of democracy, we know that the promise of freedom is yet to be realised by so many of our people.

Even as we applaud the great progress that has been made, we must acknowledge that mistakes have been made and that in some areas transformation has stalled.

We must acknowledge that state capture and corruption have weakened several of our public institutions, undermined effective governance and contributed to the poor performance of our economy.

We must also acknowledge that factionalism and patronage has diminished the ability of the ANC to lead the process of transformation and fulfil its mandate to the people.

As the ANC, we admit our shortcomings, we accept the criticism of the people and we are hard at work to correct our mistakes.

The last 25 years have demonstrated the enormity and complexity of the task of redressing the injustices of the past and advancing fundamental change.

However, the last 25 years have also shown the great power of a nation working as one to achieve a common goal.

The last 25 years have shown the South African people to be resourceful, resilient and determined.

Today, we are gathered here to remember, celebrate and honour our past, but we are also here – as the people of South Africa – to chart a path to our future.

We here are to present a plan that we have forged together to respond to the great challenges of the present – unemployment, poverty and inequality.

Today, as the African National Congress, we launch our 2019 election manifesto.

We do so at a crucial moment in the history of our great nation.

For, after a period of doubt and uncertainty, we have arrived at a moment of hope and renewal.

The 2019 elections provide an opportunity to restore our democratic institutions and to return our country to a path of transformation, growth and development.

They provide an opportunity to place the country's future in the hands of those who believe in it the most. The voters.

Through our 2019 Election Manifesto, the African National Congress is making a call on all South Africans, black and white, young and old, urban and rural:

Let's work together to grow South Africa.

Let us grow the opportunities available to our people.

Let us grow the economy so that all may have decent jobs and an improving quality of life.

Let us grow our knowledge and our capabilities, and develop the skills that will propel our young people into a new age of discovery.

Let us grow as individuals, respectful of the rights of others, conscious of their needs and concerns, and determined to lend a hand to improve their lives.

At the centre of our manifesto is a plan to create many more jobs and ensure that all workers can earn a decent living.

We live in a country where, by the broader definition, over 9 million South Africans are unemployed.

Out of every 10 young South Africans, four are neither in employment, nor education and training.

This is a tragedy of vast proportions, a direct challenge to the promise of our democratic Constitution and the cause of great hardship and despair.

The most pressing task for our country at this moment in our history is therefore to set the economy on a higher path of shared growth and to transform the structure of our economy to provide opportunities for millions of South Africans.

This requires a massive injection of new investment.

For several years, investment in the economy – both by government and business – has stagnated, stifling growth and job creation.

We have a plan to turn this around.

We have a plan to raise R1.2 trillion in new investments over five years

Working with all social partners, we will intensify our efforts to restore investor, business and consumer confidence and ensure policy consistency and certainty.

We will implement reforms in economic sectors that have the greatest potential to grow and create jobs.

We will take measures to lower the cost of doing business in South Africa, increase productivity and improve competitiveness.

We will implement the agreements reached at the Presidential Jobs Summit last year by boosting local demand for goods, investing more in sectors like mining, manufacturing and agriculture, and expanding export markets.

It is estimated that this could contribute around 275,000 additional jobs each year, nearly doubling the annual rate of employment creation.

We will proceed with the establishment of an Infrastructure Fund, in which we will pool government's infrastructure budget and use it to raise additional funds from other public and private sources to build roads, rail lines, broadband networks, hospitals, schools, dams and other infrastructure vital for a growing economy.

Today, we are launching a manifesto for an inclusive economy.

For centuries, the majority of South Africans have been deliberately excluded from economic activity, dispossessed of land, deprived of skills and forcibly settled far from economic opportunities.

This exclusion is greatest among women, rural people and youth.

We will build an economy in which all our people have a meaningful stake and from which they can all benefit.

We will enable workers to own stakes in the companies they work for and to share in the profits.

We will open up markets for new, emerging companies by ending monopolies and behaviour that stifles competition.

We will draw more women, more rural people and more youth into the economy by expanding access to digital skills training to young people, by developing and supporting technological and digital start-ups, and a more concerted focus on SMMEs, cooperatives and township and village enterprises.

We will use government's massive procurement spend to support transformation and job creation, including allocating at least 30% of procurement spend to small businesses and cooperatives.

Our manifesto has a specific focus on the economies of townships and villages.

To this day, townships and villages remain dormitories for most of our people, far from economic opportunities and often without adequate social amenities.

We will encourage the growth of enterprises in these areas through a dedicated fund that supports the development of industrial parks, business centres and incubation centres.

We will step up the enforcement of measures to prevent illegal trading and selling of counterfeit and unsafe products.

We will prevent displacement of local enterprises by big retail stores and will ensure that small producers have a place in their retail value chains.

The lack of funding for small enterprises, township and village businesses, housing and land is holding back the growth of the economy.

We will work with commercial private banks and other financial institutions on ways to expand access to funding and capital for such businesses and individuals, so that we may unleash their economic and social potential.

From its formation, the African National Congress has fought to undo a grave historical injustice and give effect to the injunction in the Freedom Charter that the land shall be shared among those who work it.

In this Manifesto, we outline the elements of a plan to accelerate land reform, making use of a range of complementary measures, including, where appropriate, expropriation without compensation.

We will continue to promote a range of land ownership forms – public, private, cooperative, family and communal.

We will implement measures to promote urban agriculture and community food gardens to promote national food security and reduce hunger.

Our approach to land reform is guided by our Constitution and by the need to advance economic development, agricultural production and food security.

We are building a developmental state that puts people first and has dedicated public servants who work diligently to improve the lives of the people.

Many of our public servants are committed and dedicated professionals who perform their tasks faithfully.

However, there are some whose indifference to the needs and concerns of citizens has led to a deterioration in the quality of services and assistance rendered.

This will change.

Civil servants must serve the people of our country with commitment, diligence, humility, respect and honesty and make sure that they are effective agents of transformation.

Land claims must be processed faster, title deeds must be provided quicker, housing projects must be completed on time.

Text books must reach all learners, and clinics must provide medical services and medicines to those who need them.

For decades, our movement has been defined by selfless service to the people.

We therefore will not tolerate those in the public services or in political office who are negligent or use public resources for their own selfish gains.

Legislation and regulations already exist to prevent public servants from doing business with the state and we will be more diligent in monitoring compliance with this legislation.

We warn transgressors that there will be consequences for those who do not comply.

South Africa will not succeed if our efforts to rebuild the country are not supported by a capable public service.

Public servants implement the transformative projects that change lives.

It is not surprising that citizens protest when projects are stalled and services do not reach the people.

We cannot and will not allow situations where government fails South Africans.

We call on all our people to join us in this endeavour to build a capable and ethical state and to ensure that those who are responsible for stealing both public funds and private investments face the full might of the law.

Through this Manifesto, we anticipate a skills revolution in our country.

By opening up the doors of learning to all, by focusing on quality and innovation, we will equip young South Africans for the world of tomorrow.

Fee-free education for students from poor and working class backgrounds will be expanded this year to cover both first and second year students, and will be progressively rolled out further over the next few years.

The available support extends to accommodation, transport and study materials for qualifying students at public TVET colleges and universities.

Many generations of young people fought hard for the ideal of free higher education and we urge this generation to study hard, obtain their qualifications, improve their lives and transform their communities.

Our education must prepare young people for a workplace that is being rapidly transformed by technological change.

Occupations that have existed for decades may not exist tomorrow.

Skills that are taught today may have little value in the near future.

The ANC will ensure that our education curricula at all levels prepares learners for rapid technological advances and the changing nature of work.

We will scale-up skills development for the youth in data analytics, coding, the internet of things, blockchain and machine learning.

A social plan will be designed to address retraining and support for workers that could potentially be displaced by new technologies.

Government will open up opportunities for young people to develop new software and applications, devices and equipment through specialised start-up support programmes.

Enhanced support will be given to existing innovation centres and hubs over the next three years.

It is unacceptable that access to health services remains dependent on a person's social and economic circumstances, with poor people still struggling to access quality, reliable health care.

The introduction of the National Health Insurance will correct this injustice.

We will finalise the enabling legislation for the NHI and make sure that everyone has access to quality health care regardless of their ability to pay.

This is a revolutionary shift, which requires that we promote social solidarity and work towards the cross-subsidisation of services – where those who can afford to pay more assist those who cannot pay; where the young subsidise the old and where the healthy subsidise the sick.

The journey to universal health care has to start with deliberate efforts to address the immediate crisis in the public health system to tackle such issues as corruption, poor financial management, human resource planning, training, and maintenance of equipment and infrastructure.

The legacy of apartheid means that the poor and working class are too often located far from economic activity and too many hours are spent travelling the long distances to and from work.

This has negative effects on their quality of life – health and travel costs often constitute a disproportionate part of their expenses.

We will ensure that people live closer to where they work and that more economic activities take place in areas where the majority of the people live.

We will improve access to safe, affordable and reliable public transport and, among others, invest in rail infrastructure and work with the taxi industry to ensure a more reliable and safe system.

The programmes to provide social assistance to the most marginalised in society will continue, household food insecurity will be tackled head-on, public employment programmes will be scaled up and initiatives to ensure sustainable livelihoods will be intensified.

The African National Congress is committed to a more equal, more just and more humane society where all citizens can live freely and prosper.

Among other things, this means that we must prioritise the rights of women, end discrimination and prevent violence against women and girls.

We have made huge strides in improving the position of women in society, using our Constitution, legislation and policies to tackle discrimination and increase representation within the leadership of our movement, in our public institutions and in the world of commerce.

However, gender based violence is a national crisis that we are determined to end so that all South African women and girls may live in peace, safety and dignity.

We call on South Africans to work together to end gender-based violence and the patriarchal practices that give rise to it.

The emancipation of women requires a change in attitudes and the material conditions that perpetuate the oppression and marginalisation of women.

We will work more closely with all stakeholders to implement the range of interventions adopted at last year's Gender-Based Violence Summit, including finalising the National Plan on Gender Based Violence.

It is important that children learn from a young age to respect one another as equals and not to resort to violence in situations of stress and conflict.

The ANC fully supports the calls for stricter bail conditions and harsher sentences for perpetrators of gender based violence and sexual assault.

More and better skilled police and prosecution authorities are needed to improve the capacity to investigate and prosecute all crimes, especially gender based violence and sexual assault.

We are deeply concerned about the effects of drugs on communities.

They destroy lives – often young lives – tear families apart, feed a culture of violence and enable the spread of gangsterism.

We will improve our social and criminal justice responses to the scourge of drug and alcohol abuse.

Through the National Drug Master Plan, we will expand recreational facilities and diversion programmes to prevent vulnerable people from becoming dependent on drugs and alcohol.

We will also ensure greater cooperation in diagnosing and treating substance dependence.

This is part of the work we must all do to build a society where everyone is able to walk the streets, to play and work at all hours of the day and night, without fear.

We will strengthen police visibility in our communities by increasing the number of policemen and women.



The police will be better trained to investigate cases and improve success rates and there will be better co-operation between prosecutors and investigators.

We will continue to intensify efforts in areas where we have made progress, such as stemming the tide of political killings, particularly here in KwaZulu-Natal.

The number of political killings has reduced significantly and a number of suspects have been arrested and are now being prosecuted.

However, one political killing is one too many.

As a society, we must show no tolerance for these acts and our agencies must not hesitate in prosecuting perpetrators of such heinous acts.

Too often, we hear how the criminal justice system does not respond to peoples' needs.

We hear stories of police men and women in cahoots with criminals.

We hear of dockets going missing and we hear of women being turned away when reporting incidents of gender-based violence.

This will change.

The ANC government will employ more police personnel and increase the training given to the police and others in the criminal justice system.

We are also going to improve the cooperation between the different elements of criminal justice – we are going to make sure that police, forensic services, prosecutors and others cooperate more and work together to improve success rates and secure more convictions.

We call on South Africans to strengthen Community Policing Forums and Community Safety Forums.

All of us must know our neighbours and be concerned about their lives.

Effective border management is an important aspect of ensuring that the country and its people are safe.

The ANC will improve cooperation with other countries in the region to ensure that we put in place a more effective system to manage migration.

Our success as a country is inextricably linked to the progress of our neighbours and the rest of the African continent.

As an integral member of the global community, it is in our interests to promote a global order that is fair, just, democratic and based on rules that are acceptable to all nations.

At a time of growing nationalism, we will work with other progressive forces to bring about a more humane global order through multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organisation and global financial institutions.

South Africa will continue to campaign, along with other international partners, for the democratisation of these multilateral bodies.

We will use our country's tenure as a member of the UN Security Council to contribute to the creation of global peace, security and prosperity.

We will continue to pursue economic integration, cross-border infrastructure investment and industrial development across the African continent.

We will work through the African Union to silence the guns of war and entrench democracy and promote development throughout Africa.

We are resolute in our support for the aspirations of the people of Palestine and our condemnation of the occupation of their territory and the suppression of their rights.

We will do whatever is within our means to promote a just and peaceful resolution of the conflict which leads to the creation of a viable Palestinian state alongside, and in harmony with, the state of Israel.

The struggle for self-determination by the Saharawi people is our struggle.

We stand alongside the Polisario Front and the leaders of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic in their struggle for full sovereignty over all their territory.

We will work through the African Union and the United Nations for the liberation of Western Sahara, the last colony on the African continent.

We reiterate our support for the people of Cuba and will continue calling for a complete and unconditional an end to an illegal and immoral blockade.

Comrades and Friends,

The January 8th celebration is traditionally used as an opportunity to identify the tasks for the ANC in the year ahead.

In promoting our vision of a free and equal society, and in advancing the renewal of our movement, the following priority tasks have been identified for 2019

- We will mobilise for a decisive victory in the 2019 elections.

The ANC remains the most effective vehicle to unite the broadest cross-section of society, and all our structures, members and public representatives must work diligently to ensure that the ANC receives a clear mandate to intensify the efforts to build a better life for all South Africans.

- We will intensify the renewal of our branches.

All leaders and members should focus their efforts on strengthening unity and working together to address challenges facing communities.

Our branches must be strong organs of civil society that reflect the broader composition of communities where they are located and that lead in addressing community concerns.

We will work more diligently to ensure that factionalism, gatekeeping, patronage and other deviant practices are eradicated.

- We will intensify the fight against corruption in government, in the ANC and across society.

Members of the ANC, working with communities and various sectors of society, should expose corruption and state capture, understanding that our efforts will be met with resistance by those who are the beneficiaries of these practices.

- We will organise against social ills such as gender-based violence, substance abuse and racism.

- We will lead the nation-building effort.

All ANC members must be at the forefront of the efforts to build non-racialism and wage war on all forms of ethnic and racial chauvinism.

We must ensure that both the structures of the ANC and those of our representative bodies reflect the diverse non-racial nature of our society.

- We will focus on the task of building a better Africa and a better world.

Through forging stronger partnerships with progressive formations and governments across the world, we will actively campaign for the interests of Africa and developing countries on all international platforms.

As we mark the anniversary of the ANC's formation, we honour the courage, dedication and selfless service of those activists who passed away over the past year.

We dip our banner in honour of giants and stalwarts such as Winnie Madikizela Mandela, Mendi Msimang, Agnes Msimang, Edna Molewa, George Chaane, Hugh Masekela, Zondeni Veronica Sobukwe, Zola Skweyiya, Eric Mtshali, Moss Chikane, Billy Modise, Archie Sibeko, Joyce Mashamba, Duma Ndleleni, Eddie Funde, George Nene, Reverend Chris Wessels, Phillemon Moletsane, Khabisi Mosunkutu, Connie Bapela, Stephen Gawe, Buyiswa Fazzie, John Ncinane, Galo Veto, Fezeka Loliwe, Flip Potgieter, Trudy Thomas, Siphon Khohlakala, Monde Dakuse, Ndibulele Nzamela, Mzimasi Giwu, Ndumiso Batali, Mandla Makupula, Nalibongwe Yokwe, Themba Kiro Kana, Siphon Mbikwana, Mzimela Cletus, Andy Sefotlhelo, Paseka Machebela, Morwesi Diswai, Nancy Khunou and others.

Their contribution to the struggle for humane social relations must continue to guide and inspire our actions.

During the course of our struggle for freedom, the African National Congress has bestowed its highest order, Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe, on cadres who have made an outstanding contribution to the liberation struggle.

These comrades, as illustrated by the literal translation of Isithwalandwe, "are the ones who wear the plumes of the rare bird", and have shown themselves to be among the bravest warriors of our people in pursuit of social justice.

The ANC National Executive Committee has decided to bestow Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe upon the following leaders of our movement.

Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe will be bestowed posthumously on:

- Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela-Mandela,
- Nontsikelelo Albertina Sisulu,
- Ahmed Timol, and,
- Charlotte Maxeke.

Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe will also be bestowed on:

- Denis Goldberg,
- John Nkadimeng, and,
- Sophie de Bruyn.

All ANC members – indeed, all South Africans – should strive to emulate the example of selfless service and dedication set by these great leaders.

In recognition of the tasks that we must undertake together, the ANC declares 2019 as The Year of United Action to Grow South Africa!

Today, we are issuing a call to all the people of South Africa, to join us as we strive to accelerate change in our country, as we strive to build an inclusive economy that creates decent jobs and as we work towards a better future for our children.

Today, we say to all freedom loving South Africans:

Let's Grow South Africa Together!

I thank you.