

FIVE YEARS OF THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT

STATEMENT RELEASED ON 20 AUGUST 1988

ALTHOUGH the United Democratic Front is restricted, and formally prevented from operating, it remains a vital source of inspiration to our people. Its achievements over the last 5 years continue to be felt today, and it remains a dynamic force in guiding the democratic movement. The regime has been able to prevent the Front from having a public profile, prevented its office bearers from speaking, but it has been unable to remove the Front as a critical factor in the equation of struggle in South Africa.

The masses of our people refuse to accept the silencing of the Front and other formations of the mass democratic movement. They openly align themselves with the Front, and take actions in its name. Among the organisations of the democratic movement, the authority and unifying influence of the Front continues to be invoked and respected. In short the masses of our people and our democratic organisations, are jealously guarding the achievements won through five years of hard fought battles, under the banner of the Front.

Achievements of the UDF

The Unity Of Our People:- the Front has provided an umbrella which has united our people from every walk of life, in every part of the country.

The United Action Of Our People:- the campaigns of the Front have united our people into effective action against the regime, frustrating it in all its programmes and bringing about the most serious crisis of apartheid rule ever experienced.

The Creation Of A Democratic Culture:- the Front has built on our peoples heritage of democratic culture codified in the Freedom Charter, and has spread this to every part of the country. Entire generations of our people have become unified around one vision of

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a liberated South Africa.

The Creation Of A National Political Centre:- When it comes to the open, mass organisations of our people the Front has unquestionably become the national political centre for opposition to apartheid. Where mass organisation previously existed at a localised and dispersed level, the Front became the vehicle for generalising the democratic movement to all parts of the country, and uniting the disparate organisations into a co-ordinated national formation. The national, regional and local authority of the Front remains a vital factor of cohesion to this day.

The people refuse to accept the banning of the Front. The symbols and slogans, and positions of the Front continue to be popularised by the masses in the streets, factories and schools. The coming struggle against the Black Local Authorities and the municipal elections will be inspired by five years of united action.

The May 5,6 anti-election protest, the Sharpeville stayaway, and most recently the June 6,7,8 - three days of national protest have been waged under the banner of the Front and its fighting ally, Cosatu. The special national congress of Cosatu was stamped by the open and rapidly developing alliance between Cosatu and the affiliates of the UDF. Our youth continue to mobilise in the name of the Front and its mighty youth affiliate, SAYCO. Our students in the schools continue to wage their battles under the banner of the Front, its fighting ally, the NECC and the student congresses. Our women, cultural and sporting bodies, churches, even businessmen, continue to look to the Front for inspiration. The Front is a spectre which continues to haunt the regime even after its banning and will haunt the regime to its grave. The UDF has survived four emergencies, the detention and restriction of thousands of its activists, the banning of affiliates, the assassination and harassment of its activists, and now it will survive the restrictions. This is because the Front is rooted in the masses, it is a product of the masses, it cannot be destroyed.

FIVE YEARS OF UNITED ACTION !

FIVE YEARS OF NATIONAL UNITY!

UDF UNITES, APARTHEID DIVIDES!



THE FRONT HAS EMPHASISED THAT IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR AREAS TO START DOING THEIR OWN PROPAGANDA: EXAMPLE OF A PAMPHLET DISTRIBUTED TO MARK FIVE YEARS OF THE UDF

UDF LIVES!

5 years against Apartheid

5 COMBAT YEARS AGAINST APARTHEID COLONIALISM

REORGANISE! CONSOLIDATE! AND ADVANCE!

On the 20th of August, we celebrated the birth of one of the formidable components of our liberation movement against apartheid, the UDF.

On this day 5 years ago at Mitchell's Plain democrats of our country in all their formations, community, students, workers and civic organisations etc. met to build a broad front against apartheid in general and in particular the:-

- * the tricameral parliament and
- * black local authorities.

It was exactly the experience of our people in fighting isolated, unco-ordinated, localised but related struggles in different areas, that led to the formation of a vehicle where all these struggles could be solidified into one and related to the overall national and class struggles waged inside the country.

Through our tireless and committed work on a 24hr. professional basis the racist tricameral parliament was exposed for what it was - an entrenchment of White Supremacy - and the majority of the people rejected it with one voice - **DOWN WITH APARTHEID IN ALL ITS MANIFESTATIONS - UDF UNITES - APARTHEID DIVIDES.**

The black local authorities, a brainchild of the apartheid system, an institution created:-

- * without consulting the entire oppressed and exploited masses
- * having no power to change our ghettos (townships)
- * having no money to solve our problems
- * to confuse our demand for one man one vote to perpetuate racism in our townships.

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Under our slogan: ORGANISE! MOBILISE! and FIGHT! we threw all our efforts leaving every house in every street, and area and therefore the entire township organised. The people responded with a concentrated fire of rejection - AWAY WITH TOWN COUNCIL ELECTIONS! THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN!

The apartheid regime nonetheless forced the tricameral parliament and the black local authorities down our throats in contempt of our rejection. A government which disregards the wishes of the people, only teaches the oppressed to disregard its laws - WE BECAME UNGOVERNABLE AND RENDERED THE RACIST INSTITUTIONS UNWORKABLE.

Today 5 years later, our UDF and other organisations are banned by the racist regime of Pretoria, at the same time it calls on us the people of Pretoria to vote on the 26th of October 1988.

What are we, the people, to do? Are we to give in to the show of force of the state of emergency and other laws and the implied threat against future campaigns? Our course is just and we have every right to fight for and defend it, anything else would be a shameful surrender. Fighting injustice is a heritage we so much cherish. When did we surrender in the face of:-

- * overcrowding due to lack of housing and schools?
- * rent being increased without consulting with us?
- * supply of electricity being cut every blessed day without any explanation?
- * people being evicted in this cold weather?
- * dusty roads causing our houses and clothing to be dirty all the time?
- * digging done on every street corner, left unmarked causing an inconvenience for both pedestrians and motorists and, dangerously so for our beloved children?
- * our school children being taken to concentration camps (the so-called NINJA CAMPS) for indoctrination against the struggle?

WE DEMAND HOUSING, SECURITY AND COMFORT, THE END TO THE STATE OF EMERGENCY AND THE RELEASE OF NELSON MANDELA AND OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS!

Udlala NGATHI uMatthews Mahlangu! Uhlutha ka kubi!

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