

A STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

TO ALL UNITS OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

COMRADES,

It is now nine months since the eruption of the current uprising of our people during which the resonant cries of "AMANDLA NGAWETHU" "MILLA KEA ROMA", POWER TO THE PEOPLE" and other equally powerful slogans expressing the aroused determination of our people to smash the oppressive system once and for all were heard throughout the length and breadth of our country.

Much has been said and written of this glorious chapter of the revolutionary struggle of our people. It has now become evident to all honest assessors and other observers of the political situation in our country that the eventual solution of the deep crisis facing South Africa will need a new and radical approach in the interests of the entire people and not just those of the privileged white minority section of our population. Honest and upright representatives of this section of the South African population boldly admit this fact. It has now become totally unrealistic to expect that any solution can be imposed on the oppressed population through naked brute force or via the grand illusion of Bantustan "independence".

Indeed South Africa can never be the same again after the events of June 16th 1976. The only true course open before our country is one which leads inevitably and irrevocably to the ultimate victory of our revolutionary struggle for seizure of power.

At the beginning of these events it had seemed as though the tried and tested revolutionary vanguard of our struggle, the African National Congress, had for once in its glorious history let the oppressed masses of our country down. Voices were heard proclaiming the African National Congress dead and irrelevant to the situation. These prophecies of doom were voiced not only by the already known enemies of our revolutionary struggle. The noisy den of vituperation against our Organisation was voiced also by the newly found allies of the fascist apartheid regime and international imperialism - the counter-revolutionary "gang of eight" renegades recently expelled from the ranks of the African National Congress.

However, as events were developing and with the passage of time, it became increasingly impossible to remain deaf and blind to the truth of the powerful impact of the underground African National Congress. Certainly, the regime could no longer afford to lull the white minority section of the population to a comfortable sleep by minimising the powerful challenge posed by the African National Congress and her revolutionary allies, especially the South African Communist Party.

With regular consistency, especially towards the end of last year, James Kruger, the Minister of Police, hit banner headlines in the South African press placing responsibility for every effective counter measure against the regime's brutality at the doorstep of the African National Congress and its allies. This includes the reports on the discovery of certain quantities of explosives and other materials with which the people were preparing to defend themselves and advance our struggle further. This discovery has forcefully emphasised the new stage of preparations reached by the underground ANC to go on an all-out armed offensive against the brutal regime in our country.

What are the political and economic realities facing South Africa today?

1. The South African economy is in a sorry mess. Being part of the imperialist system, South Africa is hard hit by the current international crisis of this system. The loud talks about an economic boom are long forgotten and have now been replaced by gloomy forecasts. It has been publicly stated that South Africa's foreign exchange reserves are so weak that foreign banks doubted her ability to re-pay debts on time.
2. Recent events in our country have made hollow the claims that the brutal apartheid regime is capable of maintaining a peaceful climate to the satisfaction of overseas investors. This has long been shattered by the repeatedly successful strikes involving thousands upon thousands of Black workers. This became a common feature during the current uprising.

3. The economic crisis facing South Africa has imposed heavier economic burdens on the oppressed population. Various estimates put the number of Black workers unemployed by the end of last year at two million. Such a situation of course is constantly fanning the fires of resistance against the brutal system of oppression and is laying bare the fundamental contradictions of the apartheid system of exploitation and oppression which can only be resolved by nothing short of the complete destruction of the system.

4. The social base of the apartheid system, the white minority section of the population is in a state of disarray and panic. Convinced that the regime of terror has failed to live up to its wild claims of having totally suppressed the revolutionary liberation movement, the white population is divided on the best course to follow. Whilst some, mainly the liberal elements, are making yellow attempts at calling upon their white counter-parts to see the writing on the wall and reconcile themselves to the sharing of power with the Black people; there is, on the other hand a growing number which feels that the best way to secure their future is to leave the country altogether. Even amongst the rabid racists of the Afrikaner Nationalist Party there are those who are now publicly decrying force as the only way to solve the crisis situation facing our country.

The regime is also facing a growing open revolt against certain aspects of its policies from some church organisations. The Roman Catholic church has spoken of its determination to integrate the schools under its control. This is yet another blow at attempts to isolate and blame the problems confronting the regime on so-called communist agitators.

5. Various international capitalist monopolies in line with certain domestic monopoly circles have become alive to the fact that total denial of all privileges to the black workers, including certain concessions on the pay packets, is no longer, after all, in the best interests of securing a lasting future for amassing profits from their economic activity in the apartheid system. Voices are now being heard calling for recognition of trade union rights for Black workers and even equal pay for equal work.

Of course, our position remains clear and unambiguous on this issue. We call for a total withdrawal of international monopolies from our country.

6. The position of the regime on the international scene has further deteriorated. Gone are the days when it used to boast of "successes" of its so-called detente policies especially on the African continent. Even those of our African brothers who might have thought of changing the hearts of the fascist rulers of our country through discussion and contact are now convinced of the futility of such an exercise. The OAU has clearly stated that the only course to follow is to support the armed struggle of the people of South Africa.

International public opinion further hardened after the SOAFRO events and since then a series of resolutions condemning the apartheid regime have already been adopted by the United Nations, the non-alignment movement and other important international forums.

7. In contrast, the international positions of the African National Congress, the authentic mouthpiece of the people of our country, were further improved and consolidated. Our acting President Comrade O.R. Tambo made a historic address before the UN General Assembly in October last year. This was undoubtedly as a result of the growing recognition and prestige of the revolutionary struggle of our people.

Also, during the same month last year an international conference co-sponsored by the African National Congress and the Afro-Asian People's Solidary Organisation, an international Democratic organisation, was held in Addis Ababa the host country for the Organisation of African Unity. Representatives of progressive organisations from the Socialist countries, Western Europe, North and South America, Africa and Asia come together to adopt a militant programme of action in support of the struggle of our people, under the leadership of the African National Congress. This conference, the first of its kind in Africa took place at the end of October 1976.

The vast majority of African governments, despite imperialist and racist efforts to the contrary, recognise and acknowledge the leadership of the African National Congress in the struggle for genuine freedom and progress in our country. Time will vindicate the correctness of their stand.

Faced with the desperate situation briefly referred to above, the fascist regime in our country has responded in characteristic fashion. A tighter ring of repressive laws has been drawn, designed to squeeze the revolutionary movement out of existence. Hundreds of our people are presently detained under the new "security" laws and some of them like Lindiwe Sisulu have already spent over a year in continuous detention; scores of our revolutionary compatriots have already perished in Vorster's jails, murdered in cold blood by the gestapo thugs of the fascist regime. These include revolutionary leaders of long standing such as Lawrence Ndzanga, Joseph Mdluli, Elnon Malele and many others. A countless number has already been murdered in the streets of our Black ghettos in many parts of the country since the beginning of the current uprising.

On the other hand, international imperialism, worried over the rising influence and prestige of our organisation have intensified their search for a viable alternative to the African National Congress. They are doing this because they are convinced that the fascist regime cannot possibly withstand the onslaught of our people indefinitely, despite their continuing support.

Having failed to project the bantustan traitors as the only acceptable and true leaders of the oppressed African majority, attention is now focussed on the black consciousness movement to provide new allies for imperialism. This has intensified after the Soweto events of June 1976. Some of those who only yesterday were hailed as the heroes of the new revolutionary upsurge inside our country are now important allies of imperialism against the African National Congress. They have totally lost sight of the real enemy.

It should also be pointed out that attempts to knock together a vile "united front" bringing together the confused mess of reactionary political groupings who call themselves "liberation movements" has intensified. At the centre of this attempt is found the counter-revolutionary "gang of 8" who only yesterday, when they were still within the ranks of our organisation were vocal in characterising some of their new friends as counter-revolutionary, pro-imperialist saboteurs of the revolutionary struggle of our people. Powerful circles in the imperialist camp have combined with certain international organisations in this crusade against the African National Congress, using all the skill and experience they have accumulated in subverting progressive movements of the people.

The National Executive Committee considers the defence of our organisation against this counter-offensive as an important political duty for all our members. We must strongly counter the slanderous lies spread about the ANC whenever these come to our attention and not wait for somebody else to do it. Our capacity to counter the intensified political and ideological onslaught against our revolutionary organisation will depend to large measure on our correct understanding of the organisation's fundamental policies.

The national Executive Committee and its working committee have during all sessions held after the outbreak of the current upsurge of our people laid emphasis on the urgency of implementing our plans for the armed confrontation of the enemy of our people.

To this end appropriate directives have been issued to the revolutionary council of our organisation to subordinate everything to this central task and events of the past few months as reported even in the enemy press have borne out the advanced level of our preparations. At the same time it is evident that the tempo of mass political actions can still be revitalised to high levels especially if we take cognisance of the recent massive demonstration in SOBOTO marking the culmination of activities planned for the week of the anniversary of March 21st.

The National Executive calls upon our people to develop the offensive on the fascist regime on all fronts as a matter of urgent national duty and necessity for the speedy destruction of the terrorist apartheid system. To the recent repressive act taken by the enemy against our militants, we must respond by intensifying the struggle on every front.

It is essential that our organisation should continue the task of guiding the masses of our people to develop the popular struggles involving all sections of the oppressed population. Only a successful combination of clandestine revolutionary actions of the underground movement with open mass political struggles of the people will ensure the rapid development of our people's offensive.

The National Executive Committee welcomes the magnificent actions of practical solidarity displayed by all sections of the Black community (African, coloureds, and Indians) during the mass uprisings in 1976. These were joined by the white students youth in certain parts of the country who demonstrated alongside their Black counter-parts against the tyranny of the racist regime. The significance of this development can never be over-emphasised.

The heightened upsurge of the Indian and coloured peoples must be harnessed for the further development of the struggle against the iniquitous Indian and coloured councils which are the twin sisters of the hated bantustan system.

The participation of large detachments of the Black working class in many successful political strikes especially during the second half of 1976 brought fresh worries to the domestic and international capitalist supporters of the fascist regime. International monopoly capitalists are beginning to show some uneasiness on the way in which their gendarme, the apartheid regime is handling affairs in South Africa. They are beginning to feel that if the present trend of events continues then they are running great risks of losing their grip on the super-profits they have been reaping hitherto. That is why they are now thinking of the sort of concessions to the workers that have been referred to earlier.

The progressive movement in our country must give all the necessary assistance to its labour wing, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in its efforts to strengthen the trade union movement.

The African National Congress pays constant attention to the strengthening and consolidation of the international solidarity movement with the struggle of our people.

One of the urgent tasks the international solidarity movement should undertake is the building of a powerful on-going campaign for the release of political prisoners. Our movement has already taken steps to reactivate this campaign especially in the light of the wave of murders of detainees committed by the regime in various police stations. This has further highlighted the mortal danger facing our leaders in Vorster's prisons.

The African National Congress will continue to expose the counter-revolutionary intrigues of imperialism whose main pre-occupation is the preservation of the colonial socio-economic structures in Southern Africa in the interest of entrenching the imperialist bridge-head in our continent, mainly the fascist regime of Johannes Vorster.

The new Carter administration was inaugurated ten weeks ago in the fan-fare of demagogic pronouncements promising a better deal for the oppressed peoples of southern Africa. It has however already become evident that its declared aim is to water-down the revolutionary forum of the oppressed masses whilst it proceeds to confuse the rest of the African continent into accepting its administration as a true ally of the African people.

Already this policy is bringing about early signs of hesitancy in certain circles on Africa which are now adopting a "wait and see" attitude hoping that the Carter administration will help bring about changes to vital problems of decolonisation on our continent. It has already interfered in the internal affairs of certain African countries.

This means that the African revolutionary forces in particular should maintain a high state of vigilance lest they find themselves turning their backs to the revolutionary principles guiding their struggles for seizure of power.

The developments of the past nine months in our country have taught us every valuable lessons which taken into full account will help us forge ahead with a more resolute step. One of them is that as the siege tightens around the enemy laager, it reacts with increasing savagery, dissolving once and for all the dangerous illusions of a quick and easy victory.

The fascist regime has recently further increased its budgetary allocations for military purposes by at least 20% bringing the total to a phenomenal figure of 2,000 million dollars for 1977-1978. This increase is accompanied by a noisy acclaim of the so-called strength of the regime's armed forces which according to the South African military strategists remain the only safe guarantee for the protection of the interests of the imperialist camp on the African continent.

The enemy propaganda machine is warning the white section of the population to expect further inroads into their easy way of life in the future in the light of the growing dangerous situation confronting the fascist regime both internally

and from outside its borders. The recently concluded state visits to several African countries by the President of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Cuba, Comrades Nikolai Podgorny and Fidel Castro, respectively, are used by the enemy to whip up a more noisy anti-communist hysteria than at any time in the past with the view to further consolidating the sympathy and support of international imperialist reaction.

None of this will, of course, change the current positive trend of events in favour of the enemy. There can be no doubt that the trends of developments in our country coupled with the successful advances of the revolutionary liberation movements in the neighbouring countries have underscored the radical changes in the balance of forces in favour of the revolutionary movement in the entire region of Southern Africa.

A similar situation exists internationally. All indications are that international imperialism, short of admitting it, is fast losing its grip on the African continent and the facade of respectability and acceptability it once imposed on the African peoples through trickery and other underhand methods is permanently tarnished. Imperialism's dominance of the destinies of the African peoples is a thing of the past.

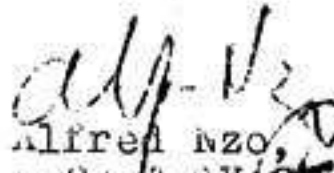
Undoubtedly the most clear and unmistakable demonstration of the new positive political trends on the African continent were the visits to a number of African countries recently concluded by Comrades Nikolai Podgorny and Fidel Castro. These visits sharply underlined proof of the fact that the acceptance of the progressive world socialist system is becoming more widespread on our continent. This is a historically important victory for all the progressive anti-imperialist forces of our continent which include our organisation, the African National Congress.

The task of making these positive developments irreversible rests with the African National Congress and her revolutionary allies and the other progressive forces on our continent. Our organisation and all the progressive forces in our country stand poised ready to execute their share of responsibility - the destruction of the fascist regime and the seizure of power by the people.

amandla ngawethu!

matla ke arona!!

Power to the people!!!


Alfred Nzo
SECRETARY GENERAL

ANC (SA)
LUSAKA

31st March, 1977.