

The National Executive Committee (NEC) of the United Democratic Front held its first meeting for the year on 13/14 January.

After four and half years of operating under the most repressive conditions imposed by the ongoing state of emergency the UDF has steadfastly refused to give in and continued to challenge apartheid at every turn.

Taking place in spite of the State of Emergency, this NEC meeting had the special significant task of dealing with a whole range of matters in the context of a very fluid political situation, both inside and outside the country.

Of special significance is the fact that its deliberations were enriched by the participation once again of our recently released comrades Terror Lekota and Popo Molefe, who are the UDF's Publicity Secretary and General Secretary respectively. The UDF and all its supporters are looking forward to their unwavering contributions in the intensifying struggle against apartheid rule. The NEC took the decision that they resume their duties in the UDF in their original capacities.

The NEC has decided that the National General Council (NGC) of the UDF will be held from 6 to 8 April 1990. The NGC is the highest decision making body of the UDF. Key policy matters are expected to be dealt with. These would include the issue of negotiations and strategies for the intensification of the struggle. The Conference will also elect a National Executive Committee. The April NGC will be the first such Conference to be held in five years.

In line with the decisions of the Conference for a Democratic Future, the NEC has decided to promote the intensification of the mass struggle inside the country and the sanctions campaign abroad.

The UDF is aware of the fact that almost 90% of its key leaders are specifically restricted from conducting UDF business. The UDF itself is a restricted organisation in terms of the State of Emergency. Furthermore it has been declared an Affected organisation in terms of the Affected Organisations Act. Needless to say that all these measures are in sharp contrast to FW de Klerk's stated aim of working towards negotiations.

In what we see as a challenging period ahead of us, we have decided to claim our rights to engage in open opposition activity. We owe it to our people that the leadership of our movement is openly available at this crucial moment in the struggle for freedom and democracy in our country and the world over.

In keeping with this spirit, the various regions of the UDF have

already held their Annual General Meetings in preparation for this Conference and very soon the UDF's offices will be reopened in order to be at hand as the political momentum accelerates.

New organisations are continuing to join the Front. The NEC has just approved the affiliation of the South African Health Workers Congress, an organisation which played a crucial role at the beginning of the Defiance Campaign.

One of the important engagements of the UDF in the next few weeks is going to be a consultation of the NEC with Comrade Nelson Mandela at Victor Verster prison. This will be one of the most important consultations he has had so far. Among other things, the UDF NEC is going to inform Comrade Mandela of our full confidence and support in the various initiatives ANC Consultations he's been involved in so far. We believe that he is in a historically unique position that can open up new possibilities and opportunities which can only advance the cause of liberation of our people.

The UDF NEC delegation will comprise of the following people:

1. Archibald Gumede - President
2. Albertina Sisulu - President
3. Curnick Ndlovu - National Chairperson
4. Popo Molefe - General Secretary
5. Patrick Lekota - Publicity Secretary
6. Mohammed Valli Moosa - Assistant General Secretary
7. Murphy Morobe - Assistant Publicity Secretary
8. Avar Cachalia - National Treasurer
9. Titus Mafolo - Nec Member
10. Paul Mashatile - Southern Transvaal
11. Louis Mnguni - (northern Transvaal)
12. Amos Lengisi (Western Cape)
13. Gugile Nkwinti (Eastern Cape)
14. Mluleki George (Border)
15. Jomo Khasu (Northern Cape)
16. Zingile Dingane (OFS)
17. Billy Nair (Natal)
18. Rapu Molekane (Youth)
19. Ela Ramgobin (Women)
20. Dullah Omar (Western Cape)
21. Eric Molobi (NECC)
22. Erica Elk (Student)

As we prepare for this meeting we call upon the regime to unconditionally and immediately:

- Release Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners
- To lift the State of Emergency and repeal all repressive legislation
- To lift all restrictions on the UDF and other banned organisations and individuals
- To cease all political trials and executions

- To remove all its troops from the townships.

We pledge to intensify the Defiance Campaign aimed at dismantling the apartheid regime through mass action.

The expectations created by FW de Klerk have made our people impatient. We believe that the possibility of large scale mass action is greater now than at any other time in our history.

Issued by Murphy Morobe (on behalf of the NEC)