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H.E. Cyril M. Ramaphosa
President of the Republic of South Africa
The Presidency
Via Email:
presidentrsa@presidency.gov.za
media@presidency.gov.za
malebo@presidency.gov.za

Letter To President Of South Africa On Burning National Issues

Your Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa,
I am sending this note to congratulate you on your election as President of South Africa in the recent elections on 8th May 2019. I wish you success in this important and demanding position of leadership in our nation. Your Presidential success will be the success of this nation. Your failure will be failure for which many freedom fighters and heroes of this nation sacrificed so much, for where it is today albeit that the ultimate objective has not yet been reached economically. There is sovereign equitable distribution of land. Africans are still colonially land dispossessed.

I value your remarks in your inauguration speech in which you said that you would be the President of all people in this country. It will make it unique and advance the people of this country. Previous ANC administrations have failed the people of this nation because of corruption, crime, failed policies, lack of education, unemployment and crime. The fact that your cabinet is 50% women and 50% men is a step in the right direction.

Release Of All Freedom Fighters In South Africa

1. Many freedom fighters of this country were never released from the colonial prisons of this country in which they were imprisoned for fighting against apartheid, which was declared a crime against humanity by the United Nations. This was through the 1973 United Nations International Convention on the

Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. I am alerting you on the following matters for urgent attention:

All liberation struggle political prisoners must be released.

Unfortunately, there are political prisoners that are still brutally held in South African prisons under ANC rule. Kenny Motsamai an original guerrilla soldier of the Pan Africanist Congress and many others who belonged to the Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army was released from prison after 27 years there.

In international law, apartheid was a crime against humanity. It is shamefully unjust that freedom fighters have been kept in prisons while the apartheid criminals remained outside, even under the rule of the ANC.

During the liberation struggle I was myself imprisoned by the colonial regimes of South Africa, Rhodesia and Mozambique. I know the pain that takes place in those prisons. I later campaigned for all political prisoners without discrimination to be released. This was at international institutions such as the United Nations. Some such political prisoners I campaigned for their release were Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, Zephania Mothopeng, Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Nyati Pokela, Walter Sisulu, and Selby Ngendane etc. It is heartless and with no sense of justice today, that those who were prisoners of the colonisers, when freed and rule; keep the African freedom fighters in the colonial prisons under colonial laws.

Is it forgotten what these freedom fighters fought for? The 1973 International Convention on The Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid was declared long ago. Why are those who committed the crime against humanity outside prisons while the Africans who fought against this crime are still there? The contribution of other liberation movements to the liberation struggle and their leaders and carders thereof must not be suppressed. This is one of the things that cause instability and secessions in some countries, including Africa.

2. The first liberation movement to resort to armed struggle in South Africa was the Pan Africanist Congress under the leadership of Sobukwe. This was after the brutality of the apartheid colonial regime had demonstrated its intransigence at Sharpeville and other parts of the country where it massacred 83 Africans and wounded 365. Only 69 wounded ones are often mentioned.
 - The PAC military wing was called POQO. It was formed on 11 September 1961. A Witwatersrand University Professor, Tom Lodge has written, "The largest and most sustained insurrection in South Africa in modern times was mounted by POQO, the underground wing of the outlawed Pan Africanist Congress...In terms

of geographical extensiveness, the POQO conspiracies...represent the largest and most sustained insurrectionary movement since conception of modern political organisations in South Africa..."(*Resistance In Settler Societies =Southern Africa Studies Volume*).

3. It is the spirit of Pan Africanism that shall liberate Africans. Unity of Africa is not a choice. It is an imperative politically, economically, technologically, educationally, militarily, philosophically and spiritually.

History is indeed, a compass that wise people use to locate themselves on the map of the world. A peoples' history tells them who they are. What they have been, where they are now, but most importantly where they still must go.

It is therefore, shameful that South Africa has not declared 25 May a day on which all Africans on the Continent and all over the world can unite in one spirit and one aim for African rediscovery and true emancipation. This is at the time the following surrounding countries observe May 25 as Africa Liberation Day. They are Angola, Lesotho, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Zambia. They did likewise on 25th May 2019! Africa cannot defeat imperialism without Pan Africanism. It is Pan Africanism that brought Africa where it is today. Without Pan Africanism, Africa would still be saddled with imperialism, colonialism and racism. Indeed, economic enslavement is still there because the Pan Africanist pace is still at a very slow pace.

ROBERT MANGALISO SOBUKWE AND ZEPHANIA MOTHOPENG DESERVE MONUMENTS

In light of the statement that you will be the President of all South Africans, I urge you to take the lead in ending sectarian politics. Dr. Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe must have a national monument erected as well as Zephania L. Mothopeng. This is to honour them for tremendous role they played to liberate this country. A third monument must be erected to all heroes of this country combined. These are Pan Africanist Congress, African National Congress Black Consciousness Movement, and Unity Movement etc. There must be no sectarianism in the politics of this country by any ruling Party. Party matters and State matters must be distinguished. This will promote national unity and the country's stability, especially in the economic context.

Let me record that history shows that this country would not be where it is today politically without the national courage, inspiration and leadership of Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe. He left his Witwatersrand lectureship post to serve, suffer and sacrifice for his colonially dispossessed people. Indeed, he was the

first leader to be moved from prison where he had been imprisoned for the Sharpeville Uprising and imprisoned in Robben Island for six years without any court trial.

It is strongly suspected that he was slowly poisoned there. He was released from Robben Island only to be banished to Kimberley until he died in banishment there. Without Sobukwe's leadership there would have been no Sharpeville Uprising, Robben Island and armed struggle in South Africa (Azania) in modern times. Let us not forget:

- a. Frantz Fanon a man with impeccable revolutionary credentials has written, "Sharpeville shook public opinion for months, in newspapers, over the wavelengths, and in private conversation. It is through this, that men and women in the world became acquainted with the problem of apartheid in South Africa."
 - b. In April 1960, Paul Sauer an apartheid colonial Acting Prime Minister admitted the uniqueness of the Sharpeville Uprising led by Sobukwe. He told the colonial apartheid parliament; "The old book of South Africa was closed a month ago...for the immediate future, South Africa will have to reconsider in earnest and honestly her approach to the concept of baaskop (white supremacy)."
 - c. A prominent African scholar at Fort Hare University Prof. Z.K. Matthews who was one time also Treasurer of the ANC, writing, in the IMVO newspaper said, "The Pan Africanist Congress is a historical exception. It broke away from the ANC [over colonial land dispossession of the African people] and launched the well-known Sharpeville Uprising which had unique international significance and changed the cause of political history of this country...The PAC launched the most significant movement for South Africa's isolation."
4. The expulsion of the apartheid colonial regime in South Africa from the United Nations has been told by Prof. Tom Lodge. He has written, "In November 1974,

PAC lobbyists succeeded in obtaining the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations and in 1975, the Organisation Of African Unity (OAU) in Kampala adopted a long document prepared by the Pan Africanist Congress arguing the case for the illegality of South Africa's status." This was even under the condition when Sobukwe was banished in Kimberley and living under severe banned conditions. *(See Sobukwe Led The Road To Robben Island by Motsoko Pheko)*

5. Sobukwe stood for truth. He is a leader who told an apartheid colonial court: "Your Worship, it will be remembered that when this case began [in March 1960 for Sharpeville Uprising], we refused to plead, because we felt no moral obligation whatsoever to obey laws which are made exclusively by a white minority...We believe in one race only, the human race to which we all belong. The history of that race is a long struggle against all restrictions, physical, mental and spiritual.

We would have betrayed the human race if we had not done our share. We are glad we made our contribution. But the whites have to accept allegiance to Africa first. Once a truly non-racial democracy exists in South Africa, all individuals, whatsoever their colour or race, will be accepted as Africans. As individuals we do not count. We are but tools of history, which will always find new tools. We are not afraid of the consequences of our action and it is not our intention to ask for mercy."

6. Dr. Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe's true definition of an African is demonstrated in the fact that the Pan Africanist Congress was the first liberation movement in South Africa to accept white persons as members. Those who had subscribed to the Pan Africanist school of thought. The more prominent of these was Patrick Duncan.

The Africanist Congress sent Patrick Duncan to Algeria as its representative there at the time of intensified anti-colonial struggle against France. Algeria had been colonised by the French. Patrick Duncan had demonstrated his only allegiance to Africa and genuinely regarded himself as an African.

7. Sobukwe " A Heavy Weight," J.B. Vorster a Minister of Justice in the apartheid colonial parliament in South Africa proclaimed:

"Then we come to the Sobukwe Clause...I appreciate the principle of this clause is concerned with the security of the state. It does not relate to crime...I have respect for the attitude of Member for Houghton [Helen Suzman]...But I want to say to her...if her amendment were to succeed and Robert Sobukwe is released

[from Robben Island prison]; we would have a fine (penalty) to pay in this country.”

Vorster added, “...here we are dealing with a person...who has a magnetic personality, a person who can organise, a person who feels he has a vocation to perform this task, well knowing what methods will be applied.”

This is an African leader whose performance the apartheid colonial forces feared. Even previous ANC governments have shown a very hostile attitude towards Sobukwe even when he is in his grave. They have behaved towards him as if he never lived on this planet. This is while they have sung “Rivonia heroes” to the sky.

8. To conclude on Dr. Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, let me remind very briefly about what the following three people have said about him:
 - a. A notable African journalist Lewis Nkosi, who later won himself a Harvard University scholarship in America, has written this about this Pan Africanist Congress leader. He is “a tall, distinguished-looking African leader, who at the age of 36 has a rare distinction of having scared Dr. Verwoerd’s government out of its wits...”
He continues, “In March 1960, Robert Sobukwe, President of the banned Pan Africanist Congress helped to orchestrate a crisis that panicked the South African government and nearly brought about the kind of political anarchy which too often, makes possible transference of power overnight.” *African Report April 1962*
 - b. It was not strange when in 1990, Dr. Gert Viljoen who was minister of constitutional affairs in Mr. Frederick de Klerk’s regime told a London newspaper the Independent, “We want to change our approach, but we would be negotiating even the name of the country. Many Blacks call it Azania. I think there is no likelihood of coming to agreement with them.”
 - c. The most desperate member of the apartheid colonial regime simply said, “If AIDS[disease], stop Black population growth, it may be like Father Christmas.” (See *Thabo Mbeki: THE DREAM DEFERRED* by Mark Gevisser page 730 published in 2007)
 - d. It was not an exaggeration when Dr. Ismail Mohammed, a Mathematics lecturer for his part, wrote: “Sharpeville stands out as a turning point in our history. In

the aftermath of the Sharpeville Uprising when the horrible magnitude of the tyrant became clear, the lines were drawn and gave birth to forces destined to determine the destiny of our country.”(*Natal Mercury newspaper 1 March 1981*)

9. Many people outside South Africa recognise Sobukwe as extra-ordinary national leader of this country. Here are a few examples:

a. In 1985 the Ahmadu Bello University in Nigeria conferred an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws (LL.D) on Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe. In his citation the Dean said:

“Honourable Chancellor, I present to you this courageous African leader, this believer in the principles of Pan Africanism, this great freedom fighter for liberation and unity of all Africans; this symbol of the struggle against apartheid; for the posthumous conferment of the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa of Ahmadu Bello University.”

What did Dr. Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe think about leadership?

The shelter that Dr. Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe used in which to practice law must be maintained and kept as national heritage for tourists. The house in Kimberly to which he was banished must also be considered for tourist visitation.

b. On leadership Sobukwe has himself proclaimed:

“True leadership demands complete subjugation of self, absolute honesty, integrity and uprightness of character, courage and fearlessness, and above all a consuming love for one’s people.”

The Sharpeville and Langa Uprising of March 21st 1960 was recognised in South Africa; only after former Pan Africanist Congress President Mmutlanyane Stanley Mogoba and I, solicited hard for this. Mr. Ben Ngubane was then the relevant Minister of Culture. He authorised the Sharpeville Monument. The Langa Monument was erected by the City Council of Cape Town at Dr. Mogoba and I solicitation. The Western Province was ruled by DA! Would an ANC government have done this if it ruled here?

Internationally, the Pan Africanist Congress long won March 21st as Sharpeville Day. This was by the International Day For The Elimination Of Racial Discrimination through the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2396.

ZEPHANIA L. MOTHOPENG AND URBANIA MOTHOPENG

Zephania L. Mothopeng was a High School Teacher by profession, also privately studying law. Concerned with the suffering and national humiliation of Africans under the apartheid colonial laws, he became one of the founders of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) on 6th April 1959. He was imprisoned for the anti-colonial pass laws now internationally known as Sharpeville Uprising in 1960. Also as well as the Soweto Uprising of 16 June 1976. The apartheid colonial court in South Africa sentenced him to 30 years imprisonment. He was then 66 years of age.

When sentencing him the colonial judge said, “You Mothopeng, acted to sow seeds of anarchy and revolution. The riots you engineered and predicted eventually took place in Soweto on June 16...and at Kagiso the next day.”

For his part Mothopeng told Judge Curlewis, “I do not recognise the authority of the court to adjudicate fairly because of the oppressive unjust apartheid colonial laws of this country...This court has false legality, the basis of which is questioned, as Africans have no say in the making of laws in the country.”

His wife Urbania Mothopeng, a nurse by profession was arrested at the hospital and imprisoned in Pietermaritzburg without trial. Their daughter Sheila was also detained here. She was expecting a baby. She lost her baby while there.

Commenting on the Soweto Uprising Case that was held at Bethal, A.P. Mda a lawyer, political scientist and colleague of Antony Muziwakhe Lembede; in the original Youth League of this country; has said:

“Mothopeng will go down in the history of South Africa as a leader who orchestrated the Soweto Uprising in 1976. He operated quietly from his private quarters ...Underground the movement grew in scope and depth and converged with patriotic efforts of Steve Biko of Black Consciousness Movement, who was later to receive injuries while in the custody of the South African secret police.”

For its part reporting the Soweto Uprising, the Sunday Times of 1 July 1979 said, “South Africa’s biggest trial and one of the longest in the country’s judicial history wound up this week when Pan Africanist Congress supporters were jailed for underground activities. They were sentenced to a total of 162 years imprisonment. The statics have set records. And 5200 pages of evidence and argument were recorded and 86 co-conspirators were involved in the entire trial including the marathon 21 hour judgment held in camera.”

Zephania and Urbania’s Home in Soweto must be maintained as a national heritage for history and tourism.

At the Bethal Trial in July 1979 Judge Curlewis passed his judgement on the Soweto Uprising case. As if he was reminding those who had forgotten what the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) fought for; this apartheid colonial judge said:

“And then the last [thing] I would like to mention here ...is that Pan Africanism is the goal of the Pan Africanist Congress...They propagate and promote the concept of Pan Africanism. This is also prominent throughout the existence of the Pan Africanist Congress...from the beginning the aims of the organisation were radical in the sense that they strove for a fundamental change.”