



**THE ANC NWC STATEMENT ON
DEFENDING OUR FREEDOM AND
SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE**

8th April 2025

As our nation commemorates Freedom Month, marking thirty-one years since the dawn of democracy, the African National Congress (ANC) calls on all patriotic and freedom-loving South Africans to take to heart the critical tasks before us, to defend the hard-won gains of our freedom, to deepen our democracy, and to unite in the face of adversity.

It was in this spirit of vigilance and renewal that the National Working Committee (NWC) of the African National Congress convened at Chief Albert Luthuli House on Monday, 07 April 2025, to process pressing national developments, evolving geopolitical conditions, and the intensifying contradictions emerging within the Government of National Unity (GNU). The NWC's deliberations serve as preparatory work for the upcoming Special National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting, and represent the ANC's collective reflection on the current state of governance, the recent budget impasse, and the complex global forces shaping our democratic transition.

Safeguarding the NDR in Conditions of Strategic Setback

The NWC reaffirmed the NEC's characterisation of the 2024 electoral outcomes as a strategic setback. While we acknowledge the decline in electoral support, the ANC remains the largest political force in the country. The moment demands principled clarity and tactical sensitivity to preserve access to state power, continue advancing the NDR, and rebuild trust with our people—especially the primary motive forces of our revolution.

The NWC considered four tactical options in the post-election context: (i) assuming opposition, (ii) entering a grand coalition, (iii) establishing a minority government with confidence-and-supply arrangements, or (iv) constructing a GNU. We excluded the opposition benches as they would have compromised the transformation trajectory of the state. We instead opted for an inclusive GNU—a

unity of opposites—designed to hold the centre, safeguard the state, and regain public confidence.

On the Contradictions within the GNU

The GNU, by design, is complex. It requires high levels of political maturity and revolutionary discipline. We understood that it was never going to be an easy journey, considering it is made up of role-players diametrically opposed to us ideologically—but we expect discipline despite all this. We are now deeply concerned by the conduct of the Democratic Alliance (DA), whose participation in the GNU has been marred by double-dealing, negotiating and acting in bad faith, and open disdain for transformation.

While the GNU Cabinet adopted three strategic priorities aligned with the ANC's Manifesto and endorsed the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP), the DA has simultaneously acted as an opposition force—opposing the BELA Act, the NHI, and the Land Expropriation Amendment. It seeks to divide government, confuse the public, and claim credit without assuming responsibility. This dishonesty undermines the very essence of collective governance.

Their Ministers have openly violated the Executive Ethics Code. Minister Gwarube snubbed the President and refused to attend the BELA Bill signing into law. Another of their Ministers travelled abroad without the President's permission and misrepresented South Africa. These are symptomatic of a party unwilling to subordinate narrow party interests to national imperatives. Such acts are a betrayal of public service and erode the GNU's credibility.

The Budget Crisis Was A Test of Leadership and Character

The DA overplayed its hand and sought to salvage lost ground. It overreached in its attempt to extract budgetary concessions through arm-twisting negotiations. Its threat to collapse the Budget if not given more Executive powers and concessions was met with decisive leadership. The ANC, working



supplanting collective global decision-making, and rising geo-economic tensions are producing a world fractured into competing spheres of influence.

This global terrain is not only volatile—it is marked by systemic instability: sluggish global growth, escalating climate shocks, intensified geopolitical conflict, and an unrelenting squeeze on developing economies. These pressures are being felt acutely in the Global South, particularly in countries like ours where poverty, youth unemployment, and food insecurity remain structural burdens. At such a moment, South Africa cannot afford elite disunity, factional opportunism, or governance paralysis. We require a cohesive domestic front, disciplined leadership, and revolutionary foresight to navigate these turbulent times.

The NWC cautioned that certain emerging global currents are inherently hostile to the aspirations of the Global South, and increasingly misaligned with South Africa's principled foreign policy. These developments threaten the founding values of multilateralism, peaceful conflict resolution, respect for national sovereignty, and the right of all nations to pursue development and self-determination.

The current international climate has ushered in unilateral actions—including punitive tariffs, exclusionary trade policies, and coercive diplomacy—that carry the potential to undermine South Africa's economic prospects and strategic autonomy. These actions, while not always stated explicitly, are clearly political in character and they have impacts on national currencies. They aim to protect entrenched economic privileges, weaponise economic levers, and delegitimise South Africa's stance on matters of global justice, including Palestine, climate equity, and the rights of emerging powers to shape global governance.

These actions also represent an attempt to isolate progressive states and discredit the ANC-led government by targeting its leadership, threatening exclusion from key global trade frameworks, and painting South Africa as misaligned with the so-

called "rules-based" order. We are under no illusion: this is an ideological offensive against post-colonial sovereignty and developmental statehood.

The NWC therefore endorses and supports the coordinated approach between the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) and the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), aimed at defending our national interests while avoiding isolation. This includes:

- Accelerating negotiations to secure fair and just tariff arrangements;
- Diversifying trade partners and enhancing South-South cooperation;
- Deepening regional integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA);
- Prioritising value-added production and beneficiation to protect jobs;
- Supporting localisation to build resilient industrial capacity;
- And reinforcing solidarity among middle powers to resist unilateralism and economic coercion.

This period demands more than diplomatic caution—it demands ideological clarity. We must not only navigate these geopolitical storms, but use them to reconfigure our revolutionary posture in pursuit of a more just, equitable and peaceful global order. Our foreign policy must remain anchored in the ideals of the Freedom Charter, the Bandung spirit, and the unity of the oppressed nations of the world. We owe it to our people to defend their future on the global stage with strategic discipline and unwavering conviction.

Defend the Gains, Deepen the Revolution

The NWC reiterated that we have a historic responsibility to lead society with vision, courage, and a firm grasp of principle. We will not cede the transformation agenda to those who do not serve the interests of the majority, defend privilege, or undermine the national interest. The GNU remains a tactical instrument—a shield against chaos and fragmentation. However, its sustainability requires



with 7 of the 9 GNU partners and parties outside the GNU, passed the Fiscal Framework on 2 April 2025. This vindicates our decision to consider a broad front that includes all parties and reaffirms that we can build principled majorities based on national interest—not ideological surrender.

The NWC acknowledged those political parties that rose above partisanship and placed national interest, social justice, and economic stability at the centre of the deliberations on the Fiscal Framework. Parties such as ActionSA demonstrated maturity and patriotism in supporting the Framework, on the basis that alternative revenue proposals will be sought, including the replacement of the proposed VAT increase within 30 days. This collaboration repositions Parliament as a site of negotiation, consensus-building, and progressive change.

Economic Recovery: Yes to a Budget for Growth and Social Equity

We reiterate that budgetary alternatives must prioritise the protection of the social wage, stimulate growth, and promote job creation. At the same time, we must manage public debt and build a capable developmental state. The ANC's Economic Transformation Committee, in close collaboration with the Chief Whip, Parliamentary Budget Office, and National Treasury, will lead the process of developing a revised revenue framework rooted in equity and developmental imperatives.

We are committed to ensuring that fiscal consolidation does not come at the expense of the poor. The revised budgetary stance remains pro-poor, pro-growth, and anchored in the goals of the NDR.

Key highlights of this progressive Fiscal Framework include:

- Over R50 billion allocated to fund approximately 1.3 million students from poor and working-class families to access higher education and training.
- Nearly R39 billion committed to the School Nutrition Programme, which feeds over 9 million learners daily in no-fee schools.
- More than R250 billion remains allocated to

Social Security, supporting over 18 million South Africans through old-age pensions, disability grants, and child support grants.

- R33 billion is allocated to sustain the Social Relief of Distress Grant, providing monthly income support to over 8.5 million unemployed adults as part of a phased approach toward Basic Income Support.
- An additional R11.2 billion has been allocated to employ more doctors and nurses to strengthen frontline health services.
- The Department of Basic Education will recruit over 14,000 new teachers, particularly in under-resourced rural and township schools.
- The Department of Police has been allocated resources to recruit over 10,000 new police officers to strengthen community safety.

In view of the recent developments in passing the budget and the persistent sabotage and bad faith, the NWC resolved that there is a need to reconfigure the GNU and reopen consultations with all GNU partners and all parties. The GNU must be defended, but its integrity cannot be compromised. Consequences must follow for parties that undermine collective decisions, violate executive protocols, and display contempt for transformation—which are the minimum standards expected of all members.

The NWC further resolved that we must protect and defend our institutions, and not leave them open to attack when they lawfully pursue their mandates. The ANC will continue to defend the constitutional integrity and independence of our democratic institutions.

Global Crises and the Strategic Posture of the State

The National Working Committee reflected deeply on the evolving global context and its implications for South Africa's sovereignty, economic resilience, and long-term strategic posture. The world is undergoing a profound transformation, marked by an erosion of the multilateral order and the intensification of great power rivalries. Bilateralism is increasingly



honesty, collective discipline, and loyalty to the people's mandate.

In light of current developments, the NWC has resolved that the NEC must urgently convene with our Alliance partners before the Special NEC. This engagement will be aimed at adopting a unified strategic framework that will guide our negotiation posture within the GNU and beyond. This framework will define clear macroeconomic objectives, including output and inclusive growth targets, Gross Fixed Capital Formation, employment creation, inflation management, and balance of payments stability—aligned with the broader Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) and anchored in the goals of the National Democratic Revolution.

Furthermore, the NEC will ensure consensus on key pillars of a developmental fiscal policy: equitable and redistributive tax policy, progressive management of debt and deficit levels, rationalisation of expenditure away from elite consumption toward social investment, and the institutional redesign necessary to realise a capable, ethical, and activist state.

As we confront sabotage, opportunism, and obstruction, we call upon our members, employees, our Alliance partners, the MDM formations, and all progressive forces to close ranks, renew their revolutionary discipline, and defend the gains of our democratic breakthrough. The ANC remains the principal custodian of the aspirations of the working class, the rural and urban poor, the unemployed youth, and the historically oppressed.

Our mission is clear: to build a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, united and prosperous South Africa. The struggle continues and the people's movement will not retreat.



The year of Renewal to make the ANC a more effective instrument of the people to achieve the vision of the **Freedom Charter**: The people shall govern! The people shall share in the country's wealth!