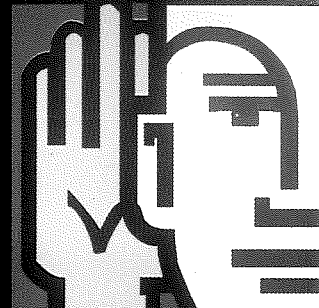


December 2005 24



UMRABULO



LET'S TALK POLITICS

ONE COUNTRY — ONE FEDERATION

COSATU

20 Years
of Heroic
Struggle



UMRABULO was a word used to inspire political discussion and debate on Robben Island. This concept was revived in 1996 when the ANC published the first edition of Umrabulo. The journal's mission is to encourage debate and rigorous discussions at all levels of the movement.

Call for contributions

Umrabulo welcomes contributions from readers. Contributions may be in response to previous articles or may raise new issues. Contributions may be sent to the address below.

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Contents

CURRENT AFFAIRS

- 3 Labour market regulation and the second economy
ANC Economic Transformation Committee report
- 9 Promoting women's skills and opportunities
Raymond Suttner
- 11 Confidence to push ahead with land reform
Position Paper for National Land Summit
- 15 Give constitutional protection to land occupiers
Marc Wegerif
- 16 Investing in the future
The World Youth Report 2005 and lessons for South Africa / Part 2
Fébé Potgieter

HISTORY

- 26 Twenty years of heroic struggle for a better life for all
COSATU 20th Anniversary
Zwelinzima Vavi
- 29 The building of a non-racial trade union movement
Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of SACTU
Ken Luckhardt and Brenda Wall

INTERNATIONAL

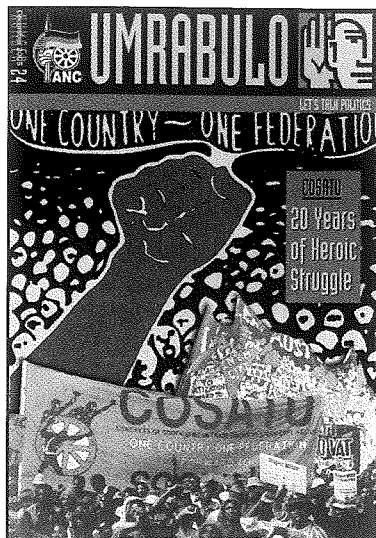
- 33 A triumph of principle, a failure of practice
President Thabo Mbeki
- 36 Western Sahara: The last colony in Africa / Part 2
Nathi Mthethwa

READERS' FORUM

- 39 Our intellectual dilemma: Battlefields of knowledge
Leslie Diken
- 41 Strategies and tactics for increasing economic participation
Tshilidzi Marwala

BOOKS

- 44 Good Muslim, Bad Muslim
Hoosain Kagee



Editorial

Long live Cosatu!

This edition of UMRABULO goes to press as we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), which coincides with the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu). President Thabo Mbeki marked these anniversaries in a recent Letter in ANC TODAY. Below are extracts from the *Letter from the President*:

"It was out of an offensive of the working class, which was an integral part of the national liberation struggle, that Cosatu was born. From its very foundation, Cosatu took important decisions that confirmed its place as a vital and integral part of our movement for national liberation.

"Cosatu played a central role in the intensification of the mass offensive against the apartheid regime and ensuring that the working class discharged its responsibility to play a leading role in our struggle as a whole.

"Cosatu joined forces with the rest of the democratic movement to advance the demands that became central to the critical campaign to create a climate conducive to negotiations. The federation also advanced a wide range of demands that became an integral part of the transformation agenda of the democratic government. These included such issues as:

- the abolition of the migrant labour system;
- the establishment of an educational system that 'serves the interests of the vast majority of the people';
- the right to strike, as 'a legitimate right and necessary weapon of the working class in their struggle against bad working conditions and low wages';
- the eradication of 'all unequal and discriminatory treatment of women at work, in society and in the Federation';
- full maternity rights, including paid maternity and paternity leave and job security;
- the promotion and protection of the right of every worker to a safe and healthy work envi-

ronment;

- a minimum wage for domestic workers and access to the Unemployment Insurance Fund;
- the initiation of 'a national programme of public works to provide jobs for the unemployed and to improve services and facilities in working class communities'.

"The mere recall of these demands made by Cosatu two decades ago, as it took up its leading role as a representative of the working class, shows the enormously valuable work the federation has done positively to advance the interests of the workers and contribute to our country's reconstruction, development and social transformation.

"On the eve of our democratic victory in 1994, reaffirming its position as an integral part of the mass army of revolution, Cosatu joined the ANC, the SACP and the rest of the democratic movement to elaborate the Reconstruction and Development Programme.

"As it begins its third decade of struggle, Cosatu will continue to play its role as part of the national democratic movement, to mobilise especially the organised workers to act as conscious fighters for the transformation of our society.

"Because of its engagement in revolutionary struggle during its first decade of existence, Cosatu will forever be honoured by all our people as a distinguished architect of the historic democratic victory of 1994. The masses of our people will always celebrate its critical contribution during its second decade to the construction of the new South Africa inspired by the vision contained in the Freedom Charter.

"These masses will continue to rely on COSATU, during its third decade of struggle, to help mobilise our workers and people to unite in action as conscious fighters for the transformation of our society, pursuing the democratic revolution in conditions where political power is in the hands of the people."



Labour market regulation and the second economy

In tackling unemployment in South Africa particular attention needs to be paid to the growth of those economic sectors capable of creating new employment. According to this report of an ANC Economic Transformation Committee workshop, labour market regulation is one, among many, of the factors that needs to be considered.

At its core, apartheid was a system to control and coerce black labour to maintain the economic basis of white minority domination. Historically, the accumulation strategy of capital in South Africa has been based on cheap labour, secured through the deployment of coercion and repression.

It was with this in mind that the Freedom Charter demanded that: "There Shall be Work and Security!" Since 1994, the legislative and regulatory environment of the labour market has been radically transformed, and in the process many of the Charter's demands have been realised. The labour market framework now in place builds stability, and avoids tension, conflict and strikes. The labour stability that this has brought has allowed for massive social transformation without disrupting production, which must be regarded as a major achievement of the democratic order.

But the last decade has also seen our labour markets transformed by a new set of objective circumstances. This includes globalisation; the complex array of changes in technology and international economic relations that characterise our world in the twenty first century.

At the same time, the social transition that has accompanied the demise of apartheid has seen a vast increase in labour market participation. Factors underlying this have included an increase in female participation in labour markets, as well as migration to urban areas. Democracy has meant that the problems of unemployment and underemployment are no longer confined to the bantustans. Freedom has also seen a significant relaxation of controls on the movement of people from poorer regions of Africa.

The First and Second economies in our country are separated from each other by a structural fault. The Second Economy emerged during the

long period of colonialism and apartheid as a result of the deliberate social, political and economic exclusion of the African majority by a racist state. While exacerbated by the imperatives of globalisation, the restructuring of the labour market also reflects, to some degree, the response of capital to the extension of citizenship and labour rights to the previously disenfranchised.

This restructuring has segmented the labour market into three overlapping zones:

■ **The Core Workforce:** Workers that benefit directly from global integration, advances in worker rights and other forms of inclusion in social, economic and political institutions. Formal sector workers are generally highly organised in the trade union movement, although new jobs created in the formal sectors tend to be associated with lower levels of worker organisation. Though the size of the formal sector workforce has diminished, it still constitutes more than half of the economically active population. While they enjoy higher salaries, secure employment and good working conditions, growing numbers of people depend on their wages. Men rather than women are more easily absorbed into this core of the labour market.

■ **The Non-Core Workforce:** The restructuring of the workplace is increasing the levels of atypical employment. This includes casualisation, fixed term contracts and working from home. Those pushed into these more precarious and intensive working conditions become part of a non-core work force. Because of the temporary nature of their work, union organisation is much harder among the non-core workforce. The rights won by workers in the core of the economy are difficult to realise in an environment of poorly organised temporary and casual workers, where women are more likely to find work.

■ **The Periphery:** The peripheral zone consists of those who have been excluded from the formal economy and engage in informal income-generating activities on the margins, or depend on the support of friends and family and/or social grants. This includes the street traders and hawkers who sell basic commodities to the poor, memorabilia to tourists and food to urban workers. While some of those operating in the urban economy are able to secure relatively stable niches in markets created by formal sector economic activity, others find themselves excluded from such markets altogether and eke out a survival through dependence on welfare grants and the barter of goods and services.

The location and interaction of these zones of work differ considerably across the various sectors and sub-sectors of the economy. In particu-

lar, many of the high growth sectors of the economy, where jobs are being created rapidly (such as in services and construction) are sectors in which union density is low and the effects of labour market regulations are weak. The differentiated impact of labour and other regulations in respect of rural economies, the position of women and other aspects of our economy are also germane to this discussion.

It is against this background of a labour market that is highly fragmented and segmented that the current labour relations regime has sought to accommodate complexity. It is a framework that rests on two pillars described as 'regulated flexibility' and 'voice regulation'.

'Voice regulation', or the role of bargaining between workers (and their unions) and employers (and their associations) in many aspects of the employment relationship, seeks to avoid either 'bureaucratic regulation' or an over-reliance on market forces in the labour market. 'Voice regulation' plays a key role in balancing the twin imperatives of 'flexibility' and 'security' in the labour market.

'Regulated flexibility', as a policy of government was outlined in GEAR [Growth, Employment and Redistribution] as a strategy to "extend the protection and stability afforded by existing labour market regulations to an increased number of workers". However, there was also recognition that this would be done in a manner that takes into account 'voice regulation' and the needs of particular sectors and regions of our country.

This poses the question, if we introduce a blanket dualism in our regulatory approach, would this not entrench duality, as opposed to the current system, which attempts to accommodate the complexity of highly segmented labour markets? On the other hand, accommodating complexity requires institutions that can operate at a high level of efficiency and responsiveness. This poses questions about the capacity and organisation of government, business and the union movement in the implementation of the current labour relations regime. To what extent does government inefficiency and 'red tape' constrain entrepreneurial endeavour? Are unions and employer organisations sufficiently organised to manage the complexity and diversity in our labour markets?

LABOUR MARKET EFFICIENCY

Much of the public debate about labour markets focuses on the supposed impediments to job creation that are imposed on business, especially small business, by the current regulatory regime. In particular, it is frequently argued that 'inflexi-

bility' in respect of hiring and firing, as well as high costs imposed by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA), militates against employment creation.

However, at present there is no empirical evidence to suggest that labour market regulation poses the most severe impediment to job creation. Neither is there research that estimates the potential employment gains that would result from a widespread deregulation of the labour markets.

Clearly, the recent wave of retrenchments in exchange-rate sensitive sectors (such as mining and clothing) has not been significantly impeded by labour market regulations. Given that these are also sectors characterised by highly organised unions and employer associations, where labour market regulation is easily enforced, the claim that labour market regulation prevents businesses from firing and thereby constrains employment growth is yet to be demonstrated. In the second economy, the high employment growth sectors and small business environment, and the absence of unions or employer representatives means that the existing labour market regulations have little impact on the practices of employers.

When we consider the functioning of the labour market holistically, then questions of 'regulation' only form a sub-set of a broader set of issues related to the efficiency of labour markets. Another set of issues that impede efficiency is those related with (asymmetric) information, search and discrimination in the labour market. Figure one gives an overview of factors that may impact on the efficiency of labour markets.

An efficiently functioning labour market is one

that is able to match supply to demand in a manner that achieves both social and economic goals. From this perspective, the key challenges facing the labour market are not a simply a dichotomy between 'regulation' and 'deregulation'. Rather, we would need to pose the following questions:

■ Is education and training responsive to labour demand? Do firms actively engage with educational institutions to produce the skills they know they will need in the future? Are educational institutions flexible enough to respond?

■ Are learners and labour market entrants responding to changing dynamics?

■ Is there sufficient labour market information to enable learners and workers to make effective decisions in education, finding work, etc?

■ Is there sufficient labour market information to enable firms to make effective decisions about recruitment and workforce development?

■ Can firms and workers act on this information?

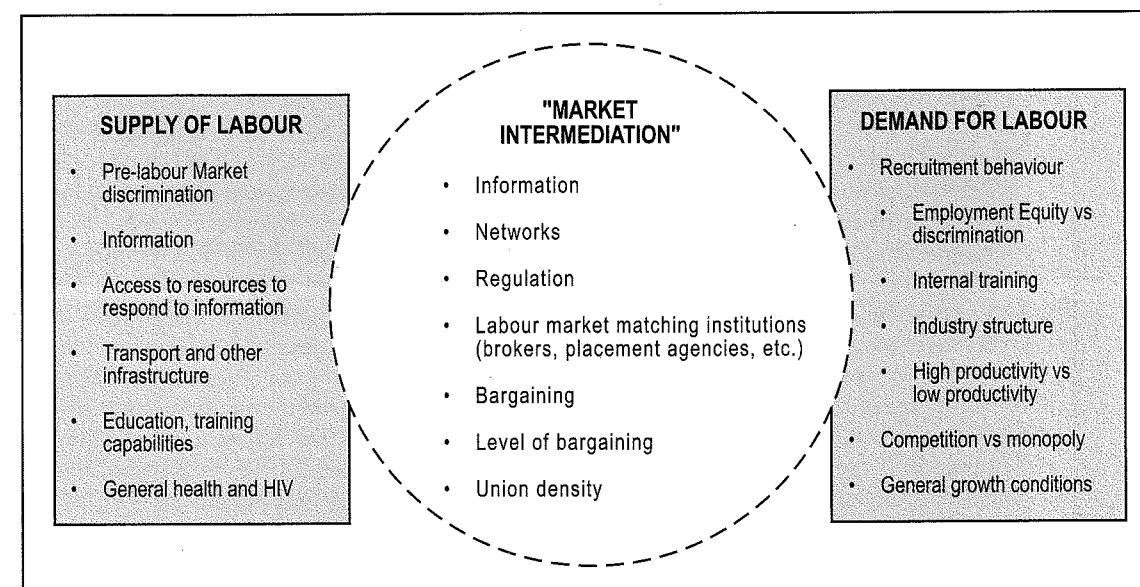
■ What external impediments, such as weak transport or expensive communications infrastructure, impede the capacity of firms and workers to act on this information?

Empirically, there is considerable evidence to suggest that labour markets are not functioning efficiently. Among the key labour market distortions is widespread racial and gender discrimination. The persistence of inequality in terms of access to employment by individuals of different racial groups is evident in Table 1. Among ter-



...The key challenges facing the labour market are not a simply a dichotomy between 'regulation' and 'deregulation'

FIGURE 1: Labour market efficiency considerations



Source: Altman, 2005



With respect to labour market regulation, we should also pose the question: how do we break down the walls between the First and the Second Economy?

tiary educated members of the labour force, Africans have the highest unemployment rates. In 1995, at 10.1%, the unemployment rate among African graduates was four times that of whites, while in 2002 it was more than six times higher (25% vs. 4%).

At the same time the gap between African graduates and others generally widened over the period, with unemployment among Coloured and Indian graduates declining slightly. Similarly, unemployment rates among matriculants were highest for Africans, rising from 42% in

1995 to over 55% by 2002, far higher than any other race group. [Bhorat, 2005]

This reflects the continuing marginalisation of the majority of the people, largely on the basis of race, from the networks and information that run through the first economy. In essence, the question becomes one of how to bridge the divide between the First Economy and those who seek work in the First Economy, but are confined by the burden of history and geography to the marginalised economic sectors, which have been described as the Second Economy. In other words, how do we build the staircases between the two floors of our economy.

With respect to labour market regulation, we should also pose the question: how do we break down the walls between the First and the Second Economy? Are there regulatory constraints that

hamper First Economy businesses (whether large or small) from absorbing labour in the Second Economy? While this question cannot be ignored, at present there is no convincing empirical case for believing that the labour market regime is a significant impediment to job creation.

SMALL BUSINESS AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

In this year's State of the Nation Address, President Thabo Mbeki said: "In consultation with our social partners, a number of constraints limiting our capacity to embark on a higher growth path, will receive our urgent attention. Based on the review of the regulatory framework as it applies to small, medium and micro-enterprises, before the end of the year, government will complete the system of exemptions for these businesses with regard to taxes, levies, as well as central bargaining and other labour arrangements, enabling these to be factored into the medium-term expenditure cycle."

These initiatives pose the question of how government can act to improve the efficiency of a range of factors in the regulatory environment that may hinder the development of small business? In general, the proportion of people employed in small businesses in South Africa is much lower than in most other countries. The reason for this stems from a number of factors, including monopolistic market structures, the supply of entrepreneurs, skills deficits and regulatory impediments such as those created by tax administration, levies, local government by-laws

and laws affecting particular sectors of the economy. Labour market regulation is also a factor.

The impact of labour legislation on small businesses is not easy to discern. Anecdotal evidence is sometimes presented to suggest that small businesses find the labour laws to be burdensome and an administrative nightmare. Yet survey evidence also exists that points to other factors, such as proximity to the market place and access to capital, as being far more significant in inhibiting the capacity of small businesses to expand employment. At the same time it is already very difficult to implement and enforce labour laws among small businesses, particularly in the survivalist sectors.

Already, the concern for a balance between 'flexibility' and 'security' in the labour market has led to considerable efforts to take into account the needs of small businesses during the formulation of labour policies. In 1996 the Labour Market Commission raised the issue of a greater voice being given to small businesses in bargaining councils. Since then, legislation has introduced some 'variations' related to small businesses, the most important of which was the introduction of a Ministerial Determination for Small Business in 1999. This determination, in terms of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA), covers firms employing less than ten employees and seeks to 'vary' the floor of rights provided to workers under the Act. The main areas covered relate to overtime, annual leave and the averaging of hours, in response to the needs of sectors that were experiencing difficulties with compliance with the BCEA, such as general dealers, private security firms, transport companies and service stations.

The determination provides for employees to work no more than fifteen hours overtime a week and to be paid at least one and a third times the employee's wage for the first ten hours of overtime per week (above this the normal BCEA rate of one and a half times applies). It also provides for the averaging of hours and the possibility for employers and employees to reduce an employee's entitlement to annual leave by the number of days of family responsibility leave.

Amendments to the Labour Relations Act in 2002 also contain features that are helpful to small businesses, including those covering bargaining council agreements.

Bargaining councils are voluntary associations of employer and employee organisations. The law does not prescribe the demarcation of the sectors covered by the bargaining councils. The parties to the bargaining councils voluntarily associate and decide on the sector and area in which they operate.

Each sector in which these voluntary arrangements have been established has its own economic dynamics. Consequently, the definition of what constitutes a small business varies widely from sector to sector. For example, if the benchmark we choose is the number of employees a company has, then the definition of a small business would differ substantially in the IT or services sector from the metals and engineering sector.

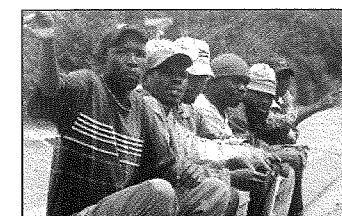
Bargaining council agreements explicitly recognise differing firm sizes within the sector. In general, agreements are usually tailored to suit the smallest, most vulnerable companies, while the larger and better organised companies negotiate plant or company agreements which set minimum wages and working conditions far in excess of the collectively bargained agreement. Where bargaining councils fail to accommodate differentiation within the sector, the Minister of Labour is empowered to enforce this through the granting of exemptions.

At present, a collective bargaining agreement may not be extended to non-parties unless the Minister is satisfied that the non-parties fall within the Bargaining Council's registered scope. At the same time provision must be made in the collective agreement for an independent body to hear and decide any appeal brought against the issuing of an exemption.

In terms of responsiveness to applications for exemptions the Department of Labour has generated the following statistics:

- Total applications for exemption: 7,373
- Applications received from SMMEs: 4,344 (59%)
- Exemptions granted: 5,670
- Exemptions granted to SMMEs: 3,407 (60%), only 797 rejected

Again the question must be posed, given the widely differing economic dynamics from sector to sector, would not the introduction of a blanket dualism in our labour market regulation result in entrenching the fragmentation of the labour market, rather than breaking down the patterns we have inherited from apartheid? The suggestion that blanket exemptions for small businesses be extended to any firm employing less than 200 workers would, in practice, mean the abandoning of our labour relations framework as a whole, since the vast majority of firms fall below this cut-off point. Given that larger corporations conduct plant and company level negotiations, a



The solutions to the current high levels of unemployment in South Africa lie in accelerated growth and decisive action to overcome the two-economy divide.

Table 1: Secondary and tertiary unemployment rates by race, 1995 and 2002

Qualifications	Race	1995	2002
Completed Tertiary	African	10.1	25.2
	Coloured	8.3	7.4
	Indian	5.6	4.8
	White	2.5	4.0
	TOTAL	6.6	14.6
Completed Secondary	African	42.1	55.7
	Coloured	20.3	23.8
	Indian	13.7	24.1
	White	4.9	8.6
	TOTAL	27.0	40.7

Source: Bhorat/Oosthuizen, 2004

simpler and easier way to achieve the same objective would be to simply scrap the collective bargaining arrangements altogether.

It is likely that a highly dualistic approach would also lead to labour displacement and, as has been the case in a number of European countries, perverse incentives would also be created. For example large companies employing many hundreds of people might register as a collection of small firms, limiting the size of each workshop to the stipulated cut-off point.

CONCLUSIONS

The solutions to the current high levels of unemployment in South Africa lie in accelerated growth and decisive action to overcome the two-economy divide. Particular attention needs to be paid to those sectors of the economy that are currently expanding rapidly and creating new employment. In these sectors the question of labour market regulation is one, among many, that needs to be further considered.

Further research is required to quantify the alleged ill-effects of labour market regulation, to answer questions about the efficiency of institutions and labour market outcomes, and to identify the broader inefficiencies in the labour market and their impact on job creation. In the context of answers to these questions, labour market reform should be considered as one part of a broader package of measures, which link indus-

trial policy, macroeconomic policy and social policy to our objectives of halving unemployment by 2014. In particular, consideration must be given to the potential to create employment in the second economy, which, by definition, is largely untouched by the current labour regulation framework.

With respect to small business a coherent view is required of the impact of a wide range of government interventions on their employment creation capacity. At the centre of this discussion should be the questions of 'red tape' in the implementation of government regulation, as well as the coherence and integration of services to small business across the departments and spheres of government.

At the end of the day, the potential gain from deregulation needs to be assessed against the potential political, economic and social costs of pursuing such an approach in the post-apartheid context. It must also be judged against the vision we embraced at the Congress of the People in 1955.

This is a summary report of discussions at an ANC Economic Transformation Committee (ETC) workshop held in April 2005. It does not necessarily represent the view of the ETC, but rather reflects the discussion and inputs at the workshop.

CURRENT AFFAIRS



Promoting women's skills and opportunities through the ballot box

Those who criticise the ANC's decision to ensure gender parity in its local government elections lists do not appreciate the importance of skills developed through experience, writes Raymond Suttner.

A dogma in some feminist writing is that national liberation struggles inevitably sideline women and their interests, no matter how substantial a role they have played in achieving democracy. The South African case in many ways runs against this 'feminism versus liberation' dichotomy. The ANC decision to require a 50% quota for women in local government elections is an important sign of its seriousness in addressing this question (whatever the unevenness there may be in addressing gender equality in general).

It is true that numbers alone cannot address structural and systemic gender inequalities. However numbers play an important part of any overall strategy to redress inequality.

But this is not how some people read this news. Business Day (22 September) quotes Aubrey Matshiqi, a political analyst with some insight into the workings of the ANC: "If the ANC

makes the mistake of putting women on the lists on the basis that they are women, and not because they have the skills that are required, local government will sink into a deeper crisis'. He says there is no shortage of women with the skills required but in politics people are put into positions for reasons that have little to do with 'improving' the capacity of government. 'I hope the quotas will not be abused to advance agendas that diverge with the broader interests of women.' He warns that the quota has already seen an increase in political contestation that could heighten tension in ANC branches as men compete for fewer positions in the organisation."

This is a revealing statement, not least for its assumption that politics is a natural terrain for men and that contestation among them should be reduced, even if it is at the expense of remedying exclusion of women.

My guess is that Matshiqi is a believer in

majority rule and affirmative action? Now if he believes in affirmative action one of the guiding motives behind its implementation is that historical legacies do not spontaneously remedy themselves. Those without conventional academic skills continue to be disadvantaged not only in jobs that they cannot get but in acquiring the experience through which certain skills are acquired.

Particularly in politics Matshiqi must know, much that makes a politician skilful is acquired in practice. Some of the greatest male leaders of the struggle, Moses Kotane, Walter Sisulu and Elias Motsoaledi had little formal education at the height of their influence and while lacking conventional skills were recognised as having acquired other skills in abundance, through experience. This made them giants in their organisations. Many of the men who have already been on ANC lists have lacked the conventional or political skills that Matshiqi may be referring to, yet they were made ANC Members of Parliament. He should do a breakdown of their CVs and see what he finds.

But what does Matshiqi understand by skills? Do we place little value on or recognise these experiential skills, when found among women? In fact, that experience and women's contribution has often been marginalised from the wider political experience, particularly in the rural areas, where they were previously consigned to fetch water and do various chores while politics was left to men.

Yet among those who did overcome the barriers against their participation, one finds in parliament Mam Lydia Kompe whose experience in rural struggles in the 1980s and the unions before then gives her unique 'skills'. Before her there were Dorothy Nyembe and Dorothy Zihlangu and many others, who learnt their political skills and practised these under the most difficult conditions and at great personal cost.

But is Matshiqi asserting primarily that women are less endowed with political skills

than men? That is something that would have to be tested both empirically but also by clarifying what is meant by skills, the many types of knowledges (intentional plural) that people may bring with them into politics, in the case of both men and women. It is my belief that many women who are in fact very experienced and skilled have nevertheless been bypassed in lists. That is to be expected in a country with a history that is not gender sensitive.

But am I speaking a language that is incomprehensible to Matshiqi? We need to recognise that many of the principles of our constitution - whether non-racialism or affirmative action or gender equality - cannot be translated into practical realities purely by statement in law. The ANC is correct to give the process a push, to open the arena to the advantage of those who have been specially disadvantaged whether through affirmative action or in this case in the process of selection of candidates.

I have not seen Matshiqi speak against affirmative action. Is it that he is comfortable with removing barriers and providing opportunities to black people in general but not for the specially disadvantaged section of the black community, black women? In short, does Matshiqi accept the gender clauses of the constitution and if he does, should political steps not be taken as is the case with affirmative action generally to realise them? If not a quota, what does he suggest? If he has no suggestions rather than a de facto devaluation of the actual experiences that many women may have or what they may learn on the job, he should come out straight and say "I do not support measures taken to implement gender equality". Let us not resort to sophistry and hide behind lack of 'skills'. Matshiqi should know how loaded this term is.

RAYMOND SUTTNER is author, with Jeremy Cronin, of the forthcoming 50 Years of the Freedom Charter (Unisa Press/Zed).

Confidence to push ahead with land reform

Drawing on the vision of the Freedom Charter, the provisions of the Constitution and the lessons of the first decade of democracy, there is widespread confidence in the effective and speedy implementation of land and agrarian reform.

ACCES to land, opportunity and growth has been based on race in South Africa for generations. A situation of profound inequality evolved through colonisation and solidified during the decades following the passing of the 1913 Natives Land Act. This infamous Act, together with a multitude of subsequent laws and practices, eroded black people's access to land and the agricultural economy, leaving only 13% of the country's land to the majority.

Land was a key aspect of the negotiated settlement that made way for democratic rule in 1994. The mandate and urgency for land and agrarian reform and redistribution has formidable strength. This mandate has three pillars, namely the Freedom Charter, the Constitution of South Africa, and the Reconstruction and Development Programme.

In 1955, the Freedom Charter was drawn up by visionary South Africans. Its vision and truths guide the country even today. The Charter sets out the goals and principles that underpin our country's path to democracy. It is a vital reference to guide and evaluate the progress and future trajectory of land and agrarian reform in

South Africa. In this context, the most important statements within the Charter include: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white."

Our country's entire history was shaped by race-based land ownership. Dispossession and systematic destruction of the then highly successful black agricultural sector condemned the black population to near slavery; to being "pariahs" in the land of their birth, as Sol Plaatje expressed it.

This cruel legacy is being addressed and must be addressed more vigorously. Land has to be redistributed from whites to blacks. This will enable our country to grow and will foster nation-building, reconciliation and hope. There will never again be dispossession of the nature or magnitude of the past. South Africa, its land, wealth and future must indeed belong to all who live in it, black and white.

The Charter also says: "The people shall share in the country's wealth." Land is an economic asset: it is not just a 'place to stay'. Dispossession was motivated by power and greed. Owning 87% of the land enabled whites to





Government has set the scene for land reform in the first decade of our democracy.

should be given tenure security. In addition, land reform beneficiaries must be integrated into a revitalised economy of rural towns and villages, and the government has a responsibility to assist land reform beneficiaries with comprehensive agricultural support.

The Charter also says: "There shall be houses, security and comfort." Shelter is a basic human right. Land reform must be part of the process that enables all South Africans to be adequately housed, and the government must provide assistance specifically for rural housing.

The Constitution of South Africa, adopted in 1996, places a responsibility on government to take steps that would enable citizens to gain access to land. The Constitution echoes the vision of the Freedom Charter and creates the foundation for the reforms necessary to make its vision reality.

It created a constitutional mandate for the Department of Land Affairs, together with the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, to ensure that there is equitable land distribution among South Africans and that the injustices of land dispossession dating back to 1913 are effectively addressed.

Of critical significance is that the Constitution balances both the protection of property rights and the imperative for land reform. Land reform is given particular status as it is defined as a 'public purpose' or of being 'in the public interest'.

It is abundantly clear in the Constitution that the state must implement land reform and bring about a just and equitable distribution of land. The work of the government is made plain: thorough and effective land and agrarian reform is a prerequisite for building equality and growth in the nation.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was developed as a blueprint for making the principles of the Constitution into real targets for growth. The RDP set the target to redistribute 30% of white-owned agricultural land by 2014.

Armed with the Constitution and the RDP, our

accumulate wealth at the expense of the disenfranchised and dispossessed. As land reforms moves ahead, the dispossession of land rights – including mineral rights – must be redressed.

The Charter says: "The land shall be shared among those who work it." The majority of people who work and live on the land today do not own that land. Those who live and work on the land

democracy gained further momentum, the task of revising policies and laws begun. A key milestone in terms of land reform was the White Paper on South African Land Policy

The White Paper, published in April 1997, was the outcome of an extensive process of public consultation. The document set out the vision and implementation strategy for South Africa's land policy dealing with, in both urban and rural environments, redressing the injustices of apartheid, fostering national reconciliation and stability, underpinning economic growth, improving household welfare and alleviating poverty.

THE SECOND DECADE OF DEMOCRACY

After ten years of democracy, the government conducted a thorough review of its work. It became clear that progress had certainly been made, but much more needed to be done. To guide this effort, the strategic objectives for the second decade of democracy were defined as employment, equity, growth and redistribution.

The government made it clear that land and agrarian reform is absolutely key to eradicating poverty and underdevelopment, and to accelerating economic growth.

Central to the second decade of democracy is fast-tracking the implementation of land and agrarian reform. Key challenges are recognised as the continuing de-racialising of access to land and agriculture, and increasing the participation in the national and agrarian economy.

Government regards the lack of access to land and secure tenure as asset capital poverty – which is a fundamental obstacle to growth and equity. It is clear to government that agriculture is to be one of the key drivers to investment and our economic growth. Indeed, land and agrarian reform are key to "eradicating poverty and underdevelopment, within the context of transforming both the First Economy and the Second Economy".

In summary, government has set the scene for land reform in the first decade of our democracy – based on the principles of the Freedom Charter, the Constitution's recognition of both property rights and the imperative for land reform, the RDP (that provided a set of guidelines and principles for land reform policy), and the White Paper on Land Policy.

We need to assess what progress has been made and whether or not the policies and legislation are adequate to enable us to conclude this important task. Although government is the lead organisation in implementing land and agrarian reform, for its successful implementation it also requires broader participation of and contribution of civil society.

PROGRESS REVIEW

At this stage of land reform, in 2005, it is time to assess, to take stock, of what has been achieved in terms of the quality and quantity of land and agrarian reforms:

- A Constitutional and legal framework, policies and programmes, systems and procedures in place.

- Just over three million hectares of land has been redistributed since 1994, of which 2.1 million ha was for agricultural use, and another 1 million for residential and other purposes.

- More than 300,000 people have benefited from redistribution and tenure programmes.

- Nearly 900,000 people have benefited from restitution.

- There has been a significant increase in land transfers.

- Political awareness of the need to resolve the land question is increasing.

These changes were made possible by an extensive stakeholder consultation process, and institutional capacity being transformed and developed.

LESSONS LEARNT

The land reform programme has been a tremendous learning experience for our country, our government and our people. Many joyful and sobering lessons have been learnt in this process:

- Land reform projects have experienced the limits of negotiations and voluntary land transactions, due – among other problems – to a failure to move beyond verbal commitments to real action.

- Markets by themselves do not redistribute land at scale, of quality, at location, and price; from rich to poor, from white to black.

- The 'willing buyer, willing seller' approach needs to be tempered by the reality of this land market failure.

- Markets need reform, assistance, and direction from the state.

- The restrictions on subdivision of land have forced beneficiaries to form large groups with all the attendant coordination problems.

- Reluctance to subdivide agricultural land, and the restrictions on subdivision of land, curbs the entry of emerging black farmers into the market outside of government land reform programmes, or leads people into a 'debt trap' by forcing them to buy land in excess of what they need.

- Tension between the protection of property rights and the obligation to undertake land reform is healthy: it helps to move the programmes forward in a balanced way.

- Current legislation does not provide sufficient protection to farm dwellers' land rights: rather it

merely seems to regulate evictions.

- Strategic partnerships (like share equity schemes) are needed to address unequal power relations (in terms of knowledge, wealth, networks, etc.).

- The 'dependency syndrome' of beneficiaries is reinforced by unending and consultant-driven training and capacity-building, and the 'my project' syndrome of some government officials.

- The neglect of the rural areas and the almost exclusive focus on urban areas has further impoverished the rural economy, while increasing the pressure on urban and peri-urban land for sustainable human settlement.

- Land reform must be an integral part of municipalities' planning, spatial development plans and provincial-level growth strategies.

WHAT MUST BE DONE?

We have the opportunity to make land reform work. Government is leading this process and it relies on the people as partners. The key elements which the state brings to fast-tracking land reform include the following:

- Reaffirming the target of redistributing 30% of white-owned agricultural land by 2014.

- Supporting a more pro-active, supply-led approach to land reform. This should include the establishment of a land reform register of target groups (including labour tenants, farm workers and the landless) and targeted interventions, including pro-active land acquisition by the state.

- Supplying a comprehensive support package for new owners. In agriculture, this would include financing, infrastructure, marketing, training and education, and technology transfer support. It would also include support for land reform projects such as water rights, housing, education, health, etc.

- Ensuring there shall be no land tenure insecurity by 2014. The restitution process should be completed by 2008. The Communal Land Rights Act will be fully implemented. Measures will be put in place to enhance the security of tenure of farm dwellers and other vulnerable groups. Evictions and illegal land occupations will be managed.

- Land and agrarian reform shall be integrated into local economic development. The agricultural economy will be linked with urban centres. Mining towns will be targeted for land use and rehabilitation programmes.

- Land market reform would include the complete the repeal of the Sub-division Act; the



We need to work together to enable land and agrarian reform to drive the growth of our economy.

implementation of a progressive land tax to promote more intensive use of land, reduce farm sizes, and reduce speculative value of land; and restrict ownership of land by foreigners.

It is clear that much has been achieved. It is clear there is more to do. No law or policy or institution or government body, no stakeholder group or rights movement or market mechanism, nor even any amount of good will or ideas alone can heal and restore the landscape and the people of our country. Together we can build security of tenure, productive lands, and renewed rural areas. The government is leading, facilitating, negotiating, supporting and financing reform. But we need to work together to enable land and agrarian reform to drive the growth of our economy, to make redistribution and equity a reality right across the country, and to expand employment and investment for rural areas and rural people.

The government is making the way ahead

smoother with a much greater prioritisation of land and agricultural reform at all levels of government. There is to be more support for land reform beneficiaries: practically, financially and institutionally. Legal obstacles – like the subdivision Act – are being cleared. New practices are being adopted to supply land more readily for land reform. The failures of the land market and the limits of the market and the ‘willing buyer/willing seller’ practices are acknowledged.

As we make our way forward we have the confidence in our Constitution, in the principles of justice and equality before the law. Never again will our country be plunged into poverty and despair by dispossession.

This is an edited extract from a position paper, ‘Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa’, prepared by the Department of Land Affairs in preparation for the National Land Summit, 27-30 July 2005.



Women from the Gabon informal settlement on their way to plant between the crops of a white farmer

Give constitutional protection to land occupiers

South Africa should follow the Brazilian example by giving tenure rights to people occupying and using otherwise unused or underutilised land, writes **Marc Wegerif**.

THE Land Summit attended by more than one thousand delegates last week made a remarkable number of resolutions. Possibly the most important resolution, if it is ever implemented, is to “insert a ‘social obligations clause’ in the Constitution to protect those who occupy the above categories of land”. The “above” categories are “unused and underutilised land, and land of abusive farmers”. This was adopted unanimously with no objections from organised agriculture or from the numerous government officials and politicians who were participating in the summit.

The concept of a social obligations clause related to land is that those who occupy and use unused or underutilised land have a right to stay on it. Such a clause in the Brazilian constitution has been important to the success of the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST) in organising hundreds of thousands of landless people to occupy and then produce on underutilised land. They have used the power of mass mobilisation backed by the constitutional right to use the land to implement very effective people-driven land reform.

The Brazilian constitution declares that land should be used for its “social function” and if not it can be expropriated for agrarian reform purposes. Land is fulfilling its social function when, among other things, it is used for the “well-being of the owners and labourers”, in compliance with labour laws, and in a way that preserves the environment.

Article 191 of the Brazilian constitution says: “The individual who, not being the owner of rural or urban property, holds as his own, for five

uninterrupted years, without opposition, an area of land in the rural zone, not exceeding fifty hectares, making it productive with his labour or that of his family, and having his dwelling thereon, shall acquire ownership of the land.”

This clause legitimises the occupation of land and gives the occupiers long term tenure security, but also sets certain conditions: the land must be used productively by the occupiers; is limited in size; and will not be given to people who already own property. These conditions ensure that the clause is not misused by speculators or politicians and business people, but rather benefits the poor and landless who are willing to work the land.

Those who fear such changes might destroy the South African economy should be reassured by the fact that Brazil is the economic powerhouse of South America and a growing force in the world economy.

A similar constitutional clause in South Africa could create an opportunity for the landless to take their own actions to get land, very important given the poor performance of government land reform programmes, and encourage the full utilisation of land by the owners and any occupiers. It will also go a long way to affirming the notion that ultimately land is an asset for the benefit of the nation as a whole and will give real effect to the declaration of the Freedom Charter and the Constitution “that South Africa belongs to all who live in it”.

MARC WEGERIF is Programme Manager of Policy and Research at the Nkuzi Development Association.

The World Youth Report 2005 and lessons for South Africa / Part 2

The United Nations' formal review of the World Programme of Action (WPAY) coincided with the release of the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF) and Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) report on the Status of Youth 2004. Although there have been a number of studies over the years on the situation of South African youth (see box), this study in its range and potential impact most closely resembles the research in the early 1990s as part of the National Youth Development Forum process, when the debates about post-apartheid youth policies took place.

The UN Secretary General in the World Youth Report 2005 notes that the “young generation who witnessed the adoption of the World Programme of Action in 1995 has now completely been replaced by a new generation of young men and women”. This is certainly also the case for the South African generation of ‘young lions’, who lived through the first International Year of the Youth in 1985 and were part of the adoption of the 1995 World Programme of Action for Youth.

The World Youth Report 2005 has many sections of relevance to South Africa, which no doubt will be taken forward by the youth machinery in government and the youth movement broadly. This article will focus on only some of the lessons for South Africa. In the main, it will reflect on the evolution of our national youth policy and institutional framework and on some of the problems facing the new generation and the new sources of marginalisation of young people.

The basic approach to youth development in democratic South Africa is encapsulated in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994), which states that “youth development... must enable young people to realise their full potential and participate fully in the society and

their future. It must restore the hope of our youth in the future, and in their capacity to channel their resourcefulness and energy into reconstruction and development". (Section 3.6.2)

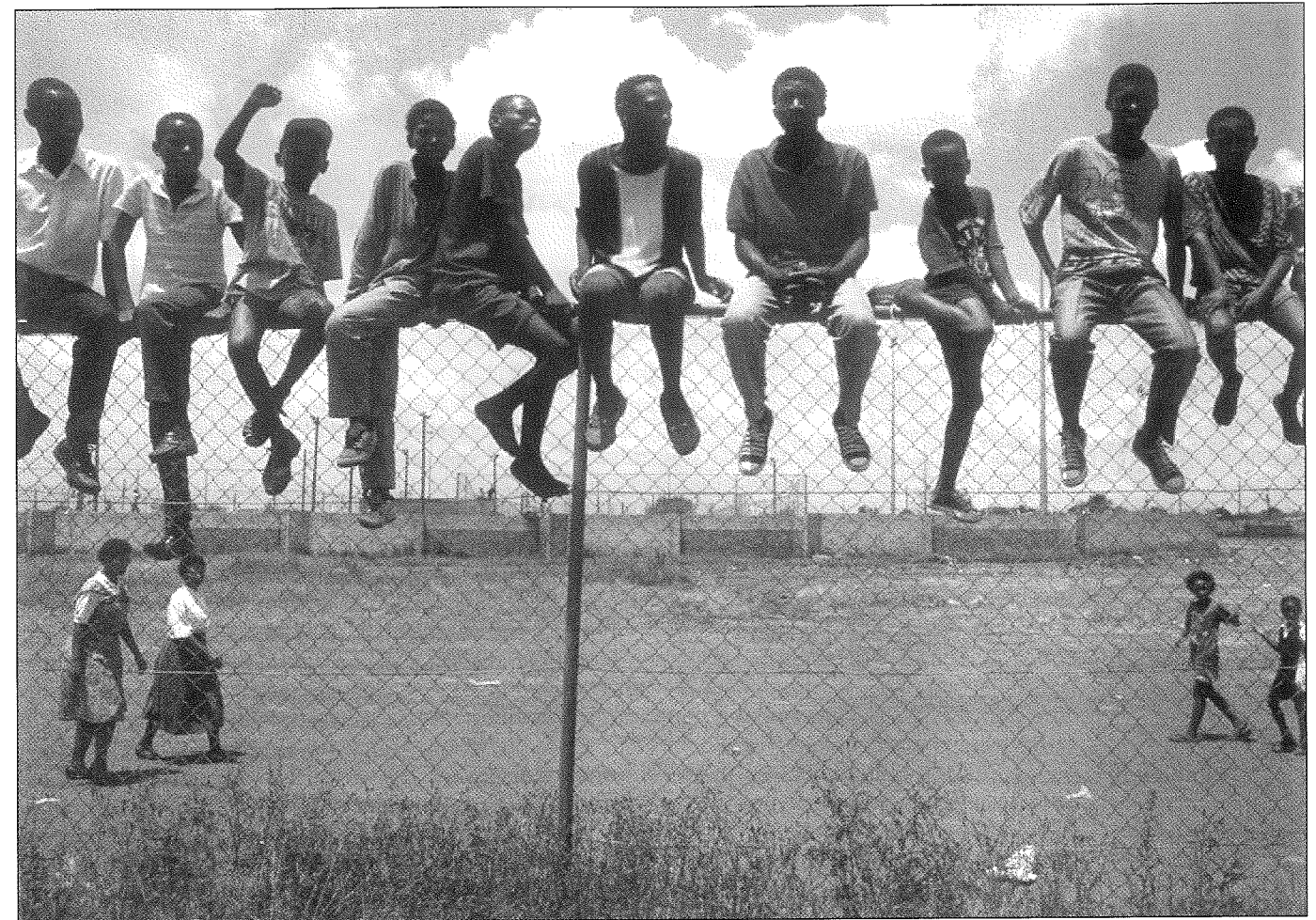
This statement in the RDP came against the backdrop of a fierce debate during the early 1990s about the then generation of youth, which post-apartheid policies needed to address. On the one hand, there was the acknowledgement of the role played by at least two generations of young people and students (the generations of 1976 and the 1980s) in changing the political landscape of the country. On the other hand was the characterisation of young people (especially the 1980s generation) as a 'lost generation', who may largely be unable (or unwilling) to integrate into a post-apartheid peaceful dispensation.

Seekings¹ aptly describes this dichotomy in approaches at the time of the transition by asking whether the youth are 'heroes or villains'. Bundy² in the same vein asks whether South Africa's (black) youth are "at war with the future".

The call from the RDP that youth development in a post-apartheid South Africa should “restore the hope of our young people in the future” thus came against this backdrop.

The Charter of the United Nations commits all member countries to work towards enabling young men and women to enjoy full participation in all societies. The declaration of 1985 as the United Nation's International Year of the Youth (IYY) was an important development that sought to place youth development in the context of human development and rights and as an important sector in all societies.

To further this objective, the UN adopted world action plans for youth, the most recent of which is the World Action Plan for Youth (WAPY) to the Year 2000 and Beyond, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1995.



The WAPY aims to foster the well-being of all young people, and their full and active participation in the society in which they live.

As a member of the United Nations, South Africa is also signatory to a number of other international covenants that incorporate goals on youth development, including Goal 16 of the Millennium Development Goals that calls for member countries to develop strategies to ensure 'decent work for young people'. Other covenants are the Copenhagen Summit for Social development (1998), Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes (1998), Braga Youth Action Plan (1998), and so forth.

South Africa's youth policy framework further draws on the Commonwealth Youth Charter, which aims to create societies where young men and women are empowered to develop their creativity, skills and potential as productive and dynamic members of their societies. Key principles for youth development in the Commonwealth Youth Charter are gender inclusive development, empowerment, sustainability, human rights and integration.

The human developmental and rights thrusts of the African Union, Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) should contribute towards providing an enabling environment for the development of the continent's young people. These institutions are still in the process of developing youth policy frame-

works, which would provide a basis for mainstreaming youth development in continental and regional institutions and policies.

In December 1994, the office of the Deputy President organised a national youth summit, which, two years later and after much lobbying, culminated in the enactment and appointment of a National Youth Commission (NYC). After a lengthy consultative process, the NYC proposed a National Youth Policy 2000, which was adopted by Cabinet in December 1997. This was followed by a second policy document in 2002, the National Youth Development Framework 2002-2009.³

Neither of these policy documents was tabled in Parliament, in contrast to policy documents adopted by Parliament on women and gender, children and people with disabilities⁴.

The National Youth Policy provides a framework for the country's approach and strategy on youth development. This situates the development of the country's young men and women in the context of human development as part of expanding freedom and rights, encapsulating not only the basic (first generation) human rights, but also expanding freedoms in social and economic life as set out in the Constitution.

In this context, the framework of the National Youth Policy is an integrated approach to youth

development. The objective of youth development is to enable young men and women to become active participants in activities which fulfil their potential and enable them to fully participate in all aspects of society. This is a departure from an approach which focuses on 'youth problems'.

Flowing from this objective, the main principles of this approach are summarised as follows:

(a) Youth development needs to be holistic and integrated, recognising the different needs of young men and women – social, community, economic, psychological – as well as the linkages between the different needs.

(b) Youth development is the responsibility of government as a whole and the approach seeks to mainstream issues of young people in all government policies, services and programmes.

(c) It recognises the unique value of young people's participation in society, policies and institutions responsive to specific and changing needs of present and new generations of youth and thus seeks to empower and enhance young people's participation in society.

(d) It takes account of the changing needs of new generations, does not assume knowledge about the needs of youth; youth policy should thus be youth centred and responsive to the specific needs of each generation of youth.

(e) It acknowledges that young people are not an homogenous group and that youth policy should acknowledge diversity, and, in our historical context, redress.

MAINSTREAMING IN PUBLIC POLICY

The concept of mainstreaming is largely borrowed from the disability and gender movement, and is being used as a policy approach for sectors that have been or are marginalised in societal policy and institutions on a variety of grounds, be that race, gender, ability, sexual orientation or age.

According to Grundy, mainstreaming was a response to the concept of 'integration', which was regarded as 'assimilationist'. The integration of people of colour, women, disabled and youth assumed simply fitting them into an existing (male, white, able bodied, heterosexual and adult) policy, power and institutional framework – with these sectors having to adapt in order to 'fit in', rather than the transformation of these very power, policy and institutional frameworks to accommodate and reflect the diversity of needs of different sectors.

Though the definition of mainstreaming is not uncontested and is constantly evolving, the following working definitions and approaches are useful:

■ "As a practice... mainstreaming is intended as a way of improving the efficiency of mainline policy, by making visible the... nature of assumptions, processes and outcomes." (Walby, 2004: p1)

■ "Mainstreaming is the systematic integration of (consistent) equality into all systems and structures, policies, programmes, processes and projects, into ways of seeing and doing, into cultures and their organisations." (Rees 2002: p.2)

THE 'NATURE OF ASSUMPTIONS' ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE

Discrimination against young people (and old people) in the main is based on age and on generalised societal assumptions about their abilities and experiences given their stage of development. It is derived from the lifecycle theories in physiology and psychology, which describe human development as a progressing cycle – one higher and building on the other – with growing competencies, which come with biological and other forms of development, as well as with experience. It is a cycle, because during a certain stage, it no longer develops, but physical and other regression towards old-age starts.

Although the lifecycle approach continues to inform major disciplines in the human sciences, its determinism has been challenged – by the feminist, 'pensioners', youth, children's and human rights movements.

This approach with regards young people was reflected in what is known as the transition to adulthood (TTA) approach, which focuses on youth as a transitional stage towards adulthood.

The sociologist, Robert J. Havighurst (quoted in Sebald, 1984: pp. 4-5) during the 1950s identified nine developmental tasks, which should be mastered for a healthy transition towards adulthood. The objective of interventions with youth was therefore mainly to limit 'problems behaviour' associated with adolescence and to ease them into the 'responsibilities' of adulthood as swiftly as possible.

This approach has been challenged over the last fifty years or so, in the main because the transition to adulthood phase across the world grew longer and longer. As access to education became more universal, more people entered into higher education, rapid urbanisation and changes in modes of production, youth as a transitional stage became more distinct. A simple rite of passage ceremony from childhood to adulthood was no longer enough. The very developments that prolonged the transition to adulthood also spawned other new developments and whole new fields of adolescent 'deviant behavior' – with studies on teenage pregnancy, juvenile

delinquency and substance abuse abounding. The 'youth problem' was thus born – with young people largely invisible, unless they become a problem.

The anti-colonial movements, the peace movements, and the youth and student movements of the 1960s forced societies to take account of what was increasingly becoming a distinct sector of society. This led to an acknowledgement that young people could make a contribution to society before they become adults and that unless they are given a stake in the system, they will rebel against the establishment. Thus across the western world the voting age was lowered to 18 or 21 years and countries started to look at developing youth policies, though often still focusing on delinquent behaviour.

The declaration of the International Year of the Youth (IYY) by the United Nations in 1985 was a watershed moment. It came in the context of a general shift in development theory which called for more integrated and multi-disciplinary approaches to development that also focus on the impact of policies on specific target groups. Youth development, and thus youth policies, it was argued needed to look at the holistic development of young people, not just in preparation for the future, but as a contribution to their present state.

The developments with regards to youth can also be located within a context where many of the struggles of the twentieth century were also struggles about inclusion, self-determination, consistent equality and representation. These struggles challenged views about ability (and therefore rights or lack thereof) of groups of people and individuals which were based on some physical (race, ability) or biological (gender, age) characteristic with the 'superior other' knowing what is in the best interest of the 'feeble minded' other.

Mainstreaming of youth development locates society's responsibility for ensuring a human development and rights approach for all sectors of society, including the country's young men and women. It seeks to ensure a macro environment which fosters the well-being of all young people and provides an enabling environment for youth to reach their full potential.

Mainstreaming of youth development means accepting that younger people's (including children's) lesser life experiences do not and should not render their experiences, views and contributions to society as less valid or form the basis of discrimination or their exclusion.

It views the stages of childhood and youth not merely as transitional, but also as valid in themselves and therefore paying attention to the qual-

ity of life during these stages and how that impacts on later development in their lifecycles.

Given the embeddedness in policies, values, institutions of assumptions about young people, it thus acknowledges that mainstreaming and integration of young people and their issues in society is a conscious process.

A study commissioned by the Gauteng Provincial Legislature (2002) on mainstreaming gender and youth issues in the legislature, argued that mainstreaming is based on three principles – empowerment, integration and accountability. According to the report, mainstreaming is dependant on strong leadership and coordination, an enabling political and legislative environment, relevant structures and appropriate mechanisms, tools and processes.

THE EARLY DEBATES

Apartheid and colonialism were premised on the deliberate exclusion of the majority of South Africans, in all spheres of human development. The democratic government in 1994 therefore inherited a socio-political and economic context which left a legacy of underdevelopment and disadvantage in all areas of human endeavour.

During the early 1990s, as South Africa prepared for its transition to democratic governance, the youth sector too engaged in debates about the best strategies to address the issues of young people in a post-apartheid democracy. The discussions were informed by a number of imperatives.

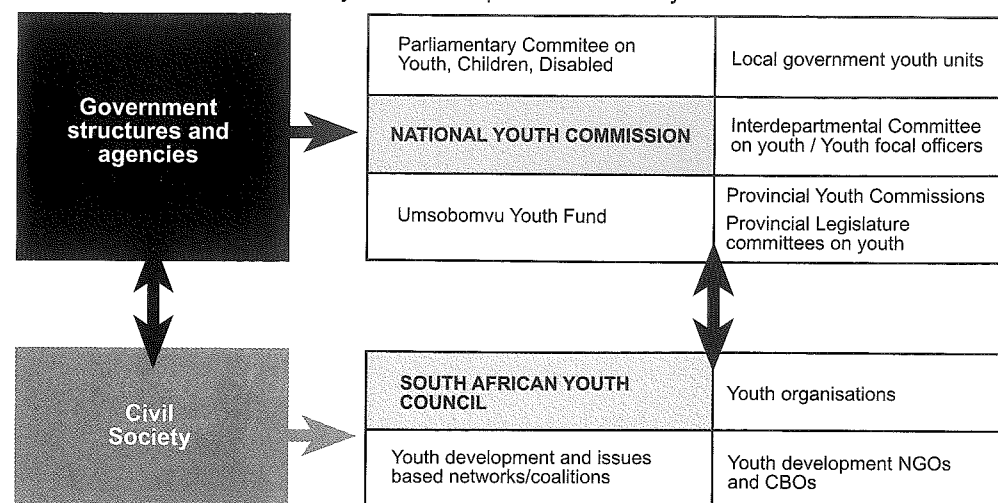
Firstly, South Africa had an active and vibrant youth sector, which made an immeasurable contribution to the struggle against apartheid. Secondly, black youth were among the sectors most affected by apartheid underdevelopment – inferior general education, lack of access to post matric education and training, racially segmented labour markets, the reality and prospects of unemployment and a host of other problems associated with not only a collapsing political system, but the disintegration of the social fabric of society. Thirdly, South Africa, as one of the last countries on the continent to win its independence, had the opportunity to draw on a wealth of post-independence experience of youth development to draw from.

The National Youth Development Forum (NYDF), a coalition of youth and non-youth organisations concerned about youth issues, therefore advocated for a two-pronged strategy: the creation of an enabling environment for



...Black youth were among the sectors most affected by apartheid underdevelopment

DIAGRAM 1: South Africa's youth development machinery



Source: Everatt and Jennings, 2000

youth development and special programmes to address the specific problems faced by then generations of young men and women.

With regards to institutions, the general consensus⁶ was that Youth Ministries lead to or have contributed to the ghettoisation of youth issues in a junior ministry, with the rest of government getting on with business as usual. In many instances, the non-governmental youth sector (and especially the youth wings of liberation movements), were subsumed and coopted into this arrangement, with the sector losing the vibrancy necessary to organise and articulate the aspirations of new generations of young people.

THE POST-1994 NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MACHINERY

The youth sector during the early 1990s argued that institutions for youth development should ensure the integration of young people in mainstream development policy, planning and programmes of government as a whole. Thus, the approach emphasised youth development institutions in government (in the form of Youth Commissions) with primary mandates of policy development, advocacy and monitoring; and with programmes being mainstreamed and implemented by all of government departments and institutions.

This also meant that the Youth Commission's institutions should be located at a level of government which will enable a birds-eye view of all of government, instead of being hidden in one department. Thus we saw the location of the youth commissions in the Office of the President and Premiers and the convening of interdepartmental forums on youth development.

A statutory National Youth Commission was created in 1996, along with Provincial Youth Commissions in eight of the nine provinces between 1995 and 2004. The roles of the Youth Commissions in the various Acts and in the National Youth Policy (1997: p56-57) are defined as:

- research and policy development,

youth development in this sphere of government.

The approach was further premised on an assumption that the success and relevance of a national youth development strategy is also dependent on the vibrancy and strength of a civil society movement of young people. This period also saw the launch of the all-inclusive South African Youth Council (SAYC) as a civil society coordinating organ of youth, with provincial and local youth council structures.

The post 1994 machinery to mainstream youth development is presented in Diagram 1. This institutional framework seeks to ensure the existence of lead agencies for youth development (the youth commissions) and the mainstreaming of youth development in all policies and programmes of government (through such forums as interdepartmental forums on youth). Oversight is provided through the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Children, Disabled and Youth, established in 1999.

The institutional framework also recognises the need for close cooperation with civil society organs of young people through the South African Youth Council, which was established in 1998. Furthermore, to focus a programmatic intervention on the economic participation and skills development of young people, the Umsobomvu Youth Fund was created in 2001.

However, institutions on their own are no guarantee for successful mainstreaming of public policy, as reflected by debates championed by the ANC Youth League about the integration of the National Youth Commission and Umsobomvu Youth Fund.

A GLIMPSE AT THE FUTURE

The World Youth Report 2005 makes the claim that the current generation of young people in the world are facing ever more complex challenges. This is probably also true for the current generation of young South Africans. In many ways, they are the pioneer generation for what a post-apartheid society can and should be.

The youth (and children) represent both a mir-

ror of our society as it is now, as well as a glimpse of our future. This is important, because more than half of our population are below 24 years, with the average age of the South African population being 15 years old – compared to a European average of 30 years old⁷.

They are the first generation who had the possibility to grow up without institutionalised racism defining every aspect of their existence. They are the heirs of our constitutional democracy which makes possible freedom of expression and equality of opportunity. They are more educated than older generations of South Africans, with no restrictions (bar resources) on the occupations they wish to pursue. The Umsobomvu/HSRC State of the Youth Report 2005 confirms the statement in the WYR 2005 that globally, without exceptions, the current generations are much more educated than any previous generations, when it states: "Access to education at all levels has improved, ...there are greater opportunities in all areas, levels of education among youth have improved and young women are beginning to catch up with, and in some cases overtake, men."

YOUTH CULTURE

According to the WYR 2005 "the dichotomy between youth in developed and developing countries is becoming less pronounced with urbanisation, globalisation and the emergence of a global media-driven youth culture". Despite the generally disparaging adult views on youth culture today (with references such as 'americanised', 'mafikizolo', 'rampant consumerism' and 'born frees'); there is recognition of many of the positive aspects of the path today's youth seeks to steer.

As many a writer has waxed about kwaito: "... (it) is not just music. It is an expression and a validation of a way of life – the way South Africans dress, talk and dance. It is a street style as lifestyle, where the music reflects life in the townships..."⁸. Placing it within the context of the new freedoms after 1994: "One of the benefits of post-94 South Africa is the freedom of expression it afforded the youth. A freedom that, 20 years ago, was a luxury for black youths living in a country torn apart by apartheid. A freedom to have pride in oneself, a freedom to express oneself. And the first place this freedom became visible was on the music scene in the form of an infectious, irresistible form of dance music called kwaito."

THE DIGITAL GENERATION

Among the characteristics of globalisation is also the link and often emersion of youth culture with

technology – television and radio, computers, cellular phones. This is seen as both a challenge and an opportunity. On the one hand, it has spawned a global consumerist culture, more often than not targeting the youth. This includes the rather astonishing development where ten to fourteen year olds (the so-called tweens) are seen as a market for advertising.⁹

The WYR2005 notes that technology is one area where young people have an edge. "Young people are often the leading innovators in the use and spread of ICT [Information and Communication Technology]... They adapt quickly and are generally quite hungry for the great quantities of information that can be provided through ICT."

Improving access to and the use of information and communication technologies among young people has become an important part of all youth development strategies. The Gauteng Provincial Government therefore places access for youth to ICT at the foundation of its programme to build a 'smart province';⁹ while the ICT sector is generally seen as among the few sectors with greater possibilities for entry and success for young entrepreneurs.¹⁰

YOUTH CITIZENSHIP AND CROSS-GENERATIONAL BRIDGES

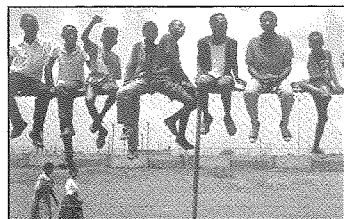
The disengagement of young people from traditional forms of societal institutions, the WYR 2005 notes, is a global phenomenon. It has certainly become an issue of concern during elections in South Africa.

Youth participation and citizenship are important for a number of reasons. Firstly, patterns of participation and engagement tend to continue into adulthood – if young people and young adults do not see the value say of voting or participating in learner representative structures or youth organisations, they are unlikely to participate as mature adults in political institutions or in community structures. Among the objectives of our Constitution is to ensure an engaged and active citizenry at all levels, as the surest protection of the democratic values enshrined.

Secondly, participation in communities and society is also about building social capital and networks. Young people who are active in some form of organisation – whether it is a youth club or organisation, a church or cultural or sport group are less likely to fall through the cracks and engage in risk behaviour. Participation in organisation also enhances their skills – in areas



levels of education among youth have improved and young women are beginning to catch up with, and in some cases overtake, men



The youth is clearly becoming restless and creative ways should be found to keep them employed

of networking, ability to access information, communication and a range of other competencies.

Part of the problem is that society tends to notice only when youth turn 18 years and fails to register and vote. And yet, patterns of participation and activism are introduced during puberty and adolescence – that is, while at school.

In this context, intergenerational issues need also to be addressed. A number of social cohesion and moral regeneration issues are about redefining the intergenerational relationships – between children, youth and adults around issues of abuse, rights, well-being, responsibility, values and identity. Facilitating such cross generational engagement is part of rebuilding family, community and the social fabric of society. Otherwise we will be calling for the integration of young people into communities and societies which themselves are dysfunctional.

PROGRESS, OLD PROBLEMS AND NEW CONTEXTS

Despite the many achievements, as an age cohort (taking the narrow UN definition of 16-24 years), youth are disproportionately represented with respect to many important social problems – for example among the unemployed and under-employed and those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Young men and women in this age group are most at risk of HIV infections, some studies suggest that close to 60% of new infections occur before the age of 24. It is therefore not surprising that prevention and positive living programmes and messages aimed at this section of the population are important pillars of South Africa's national strategy. More important in dealing with issues of youth and HIV is the link with issues of gender equality and general sexuality education, as well as addressing the socio-economic conditions which support high-risk sexual behaviour.

Unemployment and poverty were regarded as a key dimension of youth marginalisation during the early 1990s debates. In a democratic South Africa it remains among the major challenges. Yet according to the UYF/HSRC Status of the Youth 2005 report, 'it is being seriously considered at the highest governmental levels'.

Youth unemployment according to Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel¹¹, is "horrendously high", with "the unemployment rate for youths aged between 16 and 25 (standing at) 52% in

South Africa, compared with a national average for all ages of 26.5%." The Young Communist League correctly calls it a "national crisis".

Minister of Labour Membathisi Mdladlana refers to a "powder keg waiting to explode". "I have noted lots of protests in Africa, including South Africa, from youths and this is an indication that something is not right. The youth is clearly becoming restless and creative ways should be found to keep them employed," he said¹².

The WYR 2005 also notes the extent to which globalisation has "changed the structure of labour markets", to which young people as "newcomers" are most vulnerable. Young men and women the world over are increasingly dependent on low cost, flexible and irregular jobs.

In Japan, for example, long known for its commitment to full employment, the phenomenon of 'freeters' (young people with no regular full time employment) has become a national concern, with some studies putting the figure between 2-4 million young people in 2001 and 2002 and rising to as high as 10 million by 2014. 'Freeters' often work at convenience stores, supermarkets, fast food outlets, restaurants, and other low paying, low skill jobs; two thirds of them never having had a permanent job.¹³

Atypical employment in South Africa, in the context of downscaling, casualisation and outsourcing, is also increasingly becoming the more typical form of first time employment for young people first entering the labour market.

CHALLENGES OF YOUTH POLICY – INTO THE FUTURE

The World Youth Report 2005 is important because it paints the situation of youth in the world on a broad canvass, highlighting the main issues for the new generations of youth. For South Africa, there are a number of challenges, some which this article has sought to highlight.

There are some issues which the WYR 2005 draws attention to, but which as yet has to gain some prominence in our national discourse. Migration and urbanisation and the effect on young people are among these issues; both in terms of the large numbers of young people who move and settle in urban areas without the support of family and community, as well as the issues of young immigrants settling in South Africa from other parts of the continent.

To respond to this, and other new issues highlighted in the report, will require ongoing engagement between society and young people on the challenges. It will require that we also consciously disaggregate our statistics on the

basis of age (as we increasingly do on the basis of gender).

More importantly, as the WYR 2005 so tellingly concludes, to meet the Millennium Development Goals, all societies strongly need to scale up investments in youth. In South Africa too, most youth development programmes continue to suffer from the malady which President Thabo Mbeki ascribed to local government:

"...focusing on micro projects that have very little impact (and) no plans for big anchor projects with large socio-economic spin-offs."¹⁴

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13. See for example the special edition on Japan Labour Review Vol 2 No. 3, Summer 2005 and other studies by the Japan Institution for Labour Policy and Training. <http://www.jil.go.jp/english/JLR.htm> and Kosugi R. (2004) "The Transition from School to Work in Japan: Understanding the Increase in Freeter and Jobless Youth" in Japan Labour Review Vol. 1 No. 1 of Winter 2004.
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REPORTS ON THE SITUATION OF YOUTH SINCE 1990

(in chronological order)

■ **The Joint Enrichment Project/National Youth Development Forum 'Marginalised youth research programme'**, which included a national baseline survey, published as 'Growing up Tough: A national survey of South African youth'; research on different dimensions of marginalisation (Black youth in crisis: Facing the future) as well as international investigations on possible policy and programmatic interventions (Creating a future youth policy for South Africa). The JEP/NYDF initiative was against the backdrop of (black) youth being referred to as a 'lost generation' and sought to challenge this view by investigating the societal factors which impacted on the situation of young people, rather than blaming the youth. The survey concluded that there were twelve dimensions which contributed to youth marginalisation, including such factors as the impact of apartheid policies on black families, the education system, criminal and political violence, unemployment and so forth. The report highlighted the fact that by 1989, only one in ten youth could find employment in the formal sector. On the basis of these dimensions, it concluded that the overwhelming majority (75%) of young people at that stage were either marginalised or at risk of being marginalised from the mainstream of society (Figure 1). The survey, which included black and white youth, also shed light on the differentiation of these dimensions based on race, gender and location. Contrary to popular belief at the time, it revealed that it was not only black youth that were at risk of marginalisation. The survey findings and conclusions, along with the other research papers, formed the basis for the development of the National Youth Development Forum (NYDF) and other youth development strategies and programmes during the early 1990s.

■ **Cooperative Research Programme: South African Youth** (1991-93), published as 'Youth in the New South Africa' (1994), edited by Van Zyl Slabbert, C. Malan, H. Marais, J. Oliver and R. Riordan. This research project ran parallel to the

NYDF/JEP programme, probably reflective of the political divides of the time. The SAY report includes a survey of youth conducted in 1993, and 43 research papers on various aspects of the situation of youth. It sought to investigate definitions of youth and various youth categories, to identify the most important social forces that influence young people, and to integrate these findings in a comprehensive youth policy. This research project also asked the question whether there is a 'youth crisis' in South Africa and concluded in the negative. Instead, it proposed a list of youth problems which required interventions, and advocated for a national youth policy to address these problems.

■ **The National Youth Service Initiative** (1993): Following the assassination of Chris Hani in 1993, much concern was raised about the possibility of (unemployed) youth derailing the negotiations process. A range of different public proposals were made – from conscripting them into Chris Hani peace corps or military style youth service to other more benign suggestions. The NYDF took the initiative to convene a multi-sectoral task team, chaired by Bob Tucker, to investigate and develop a comprehensive proposal on a national youth service initiative for South Africa. The NYDF also piloted during 1994/1995 four youth service projects, the lessons of which informed the subsequent NYC Green Paper on National Youth Service.

■ **The Out-of-School Youth Initiative** (1994-96). The NYDF and the Department of Education jointly commissioned the Community Agency for Social Research (CASE) to do further research on a specific category of youth, those who were out of school and unemployed. At issue was whether youth whose schooling was interrupted, or who missed out on schooling during the 1980s, are to be adequately catered for within the RDP, or passed over in favour of children of school-going age and adults equipped to compete for jobs. This became even more of an

issue when the department introduced measures at the upper end of secondary schools to discourage over-aged learners, with many matriculants thus unable to return to school to rewrite. The research included focus groups, a national survey and life stories of the targeted youth. Findings from the research were used as the basis for policy recommendations to the Department of Education.

■ **The Inter-ministerial committee on Young people at risk** (1995-1998): The IMC was appointed in 1995 and chaired by the Minister of Welfare and Population Development. Its brief was to make recommendations on the situation of children and youth in trouble with the law, and to undertake a comprehensive review of the juvenile justice system in the country. After starting out as an inquiry relating to criminal justice only (the number of juveniles held while awaiting trial, and the duration and conditions of their detention), the committee's scope was significantly broadened, and its task became that of designing and enabling the implementation of an integrated child and youth care system based on a developmental and ecological perspective.

■ **'Youth 2000: A Study of Youth in South Africa'** done by the Community Agency for Social Research (CASE) for the Royal Netherlands Embassy. It was regarded as a follow-up to the baseline CASE survey of 1992-93, though with different areas of emphasis.

■ **Status of the Youth 2002** was commissioned by the National Youth Commission to provide updated baseline information on the situation of youth, and make policy recommendations. It gives an overview on key aspects of post-1994 policies affecting young people, which were highlighted as priority areas in the National Youth Policy (1997).

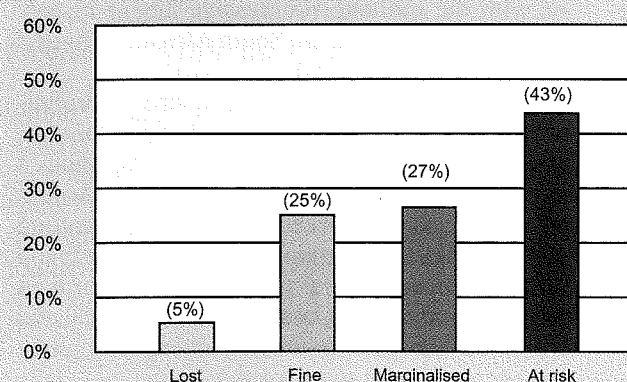
■ **The First South African National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey** (2002): The survey was conducted by the Medical Research Council for the Department of Health to establish the prevalence of key risk behaviours among children and youth below the age of 19 years. The focus was on the following types of behaviour: intentional and unintentional injuries, violence, traffic safety, suicide related behaviour, substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, tobacco), sexual behaviour, nutrition and dietary behaviours, physical activity and hygiene. The objective of the research was to identify risk behaviour, to provide a basis for policies and interventions, and a baseline for tracking changes and/or impact of interventions. The report recommended the establishment of a Youth Development Programme to be responsible for health and social development programming across government social clusters, in conjunction with the NYC.

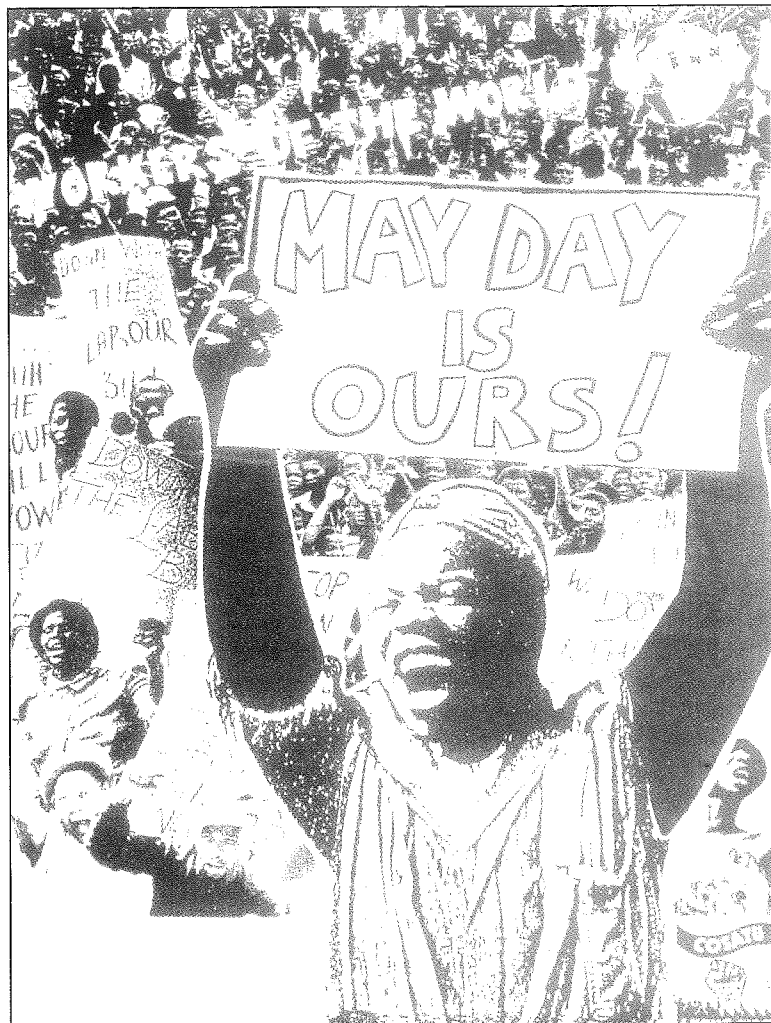
■ **Other:** In addition to the above research projects which tended to cover either all youth or a significant sector of the youth, the last decade has seen a growing body of research on youth matters, some initiated by the youth institutions (the National and Provincial Youth Commissions, Umsobomvu), but many by other institutions, researchers and policy analysts inside and outside of government.

■ **Umsobomvu Youth Fund/HSRC Status of the Youth 2005 Report**, from www.hsra.ac.za. The focus of the report is the status of youth in the first decade of democracy with an emphasis on key socio-economic areas, including economic participation, education and skills development, and poverty, health and well-being, and social integration and civic engagement.

Figure 1: Youth marginalisation and exclusion

Growing up Tough survey





HISTORY

Twenty years of heroic struggle for a better life for all

Despite the many challenges it faces today, Cosatu remains a dynamic and vibrant trade union movement that can boast many achievements in its 20 years, writes Zwelinzima Vavi.

ON 1 December 2005 the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) celebrates its 20th birthday. We approach this historic anniversary inspired by our history of struggle to overcome the many challenges that have faced the working class and the liberation movement over those years. We were always guided by a vision of a union movement committed not only to defending its members but also to social transformation, in South Africa and internationally.

We will use the 20th anniversary to reassert our unwavering commitment to our socialist principles. As we face our next 20 years, we are confident and united, armed with 'Consolidating Working Class Power for Quality Jobs - Towards 2015', the document adopted by Cosatu's 8th national congress to carry us forward to our 30th Anniversary in 2015.

At the height of the struggle against apartheid, a new giant arose to represent the interests of workers. That giant was Cosatu. Its birth signalled both the confidence of the working class in its struggle against employers and the apartheid state, and the coming of age of the

post-1973 labour movement.

Our movement broke with the reformist agenda of the unions then in existence and reconnected with the militant, progressive labour history that was embodied in the South African Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu).

At its foundation, Cosatu faced three interrelated challenges that marked its distinct form of trade unionism. They were, first, building a strong and militant union movement that would be a home to all workers; second, representing workers' interests against the employers; and third, challenging the might of the apartheid state. From the start, Cosatu blended political and workplace struggles to unify workers and build a strong and vibrant movement.

Although the context has changed since the transition to democracy, Cosatu continues to play a central role in shaping the economic and political landscape and advancing the interest of workers in the workplace.

The first ten years of Cosatu, from 1985 to 1995, was a period of consolidation and the fight for recognition by both employers and the state.

It was also shaped by hectic political activism, in which Cosatu's vital role attracted repression and violence from the apartheid state.

In the world of work, Cosatu fought for recognition from employers and led spectacular battles to advance the interests of the working class. Cosatu's Living Wage Campaign took forward workers' yearning for better pay and working conditions. Cosatu also challenged apartheid labour laws and successfully blocked the imposition of the apartheid Labour Relations Act in 1989.

Cosatu played a central role in the mass democratic movement that took on the apartheid government in the 1980s. Activists and shop stewards from the labour movement led community struggles. They were active in almost all formations of the democratic movement. When scores of activists from the democratic movement were detained or forced underground by the state of emergency, Cosatu remained as the main force still able to carry high the liberation flag.

Cosatu challenged the economic agenda of the apartheid state through the anti-privatisation, fuel-price and anti-VAT campaigns. The apartheid state grudgingly came to the table to discuss these matters, leading to the formation of the National Economic Forum, the predecessor of the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC). This concession was historic, as it forced the apartheid government to negotiate economic policy. It stopped attempts fundamentally to restructure the economy on the eve of the democratic breakthrough.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the Alliance programme of action from 1994, started in vigorous debates within Cosatu. The RDP was adopted by the ANC as its electoral platform in 1994. Subsequently the state moved away from key elements of this progressive vision, notably through the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR). Still, the RDP continues to provide a core vision for the Alliance.

In the past ten years, with the transition to democracy, Cosatu had to adjust to a qualitatively new political climate. This period was fraught with political and organisational challenges.

Cosatu faced the dual reality of a democratic government combined with largely unchanged socio-economic relations. Local and international capital used its power to lobby for conservative economic policies, with overt and covert

threats against the ANC government. Cosatu had to combat the agenda of capital and manage the intricate politics of supporting an ally in government, while simultaneously challenging deviations from progressive policies.

The fact that the state employs many Cosatu members further complicated the situation. Particularly in the late 1990s, Cosatu public sector unions were pitted against the democratic state's policy of holding down wages as part of its conservative fiscal policy.

The history of the 1990s will go down as one in which Cosatu challenged the ANC government's macro-economic policy and privatisation and increasingly represented public-sector workers. Ultimately this set of challenges led to acrimonious debates between the ANC and Cosatu, and almost plunged the Alliance into annihilation.

By the mid-2000s, the democratic movement and the Alliance had found new ways to live with the conflict. On the one hand, the state began to admit the need for stronger intervention to ensure equality and employment creation. On the other, the Alliance became more willing to tolerate disagreements. Still, maintaining the unity of the democratic movement in the face of growing class differentiation remained a central challenge.

Organisationally, the last ten years showed first extraordinary growth and then stagnation and even decline. Between the Eighth National Congress and July 2005, membership in the Federation dropped by 2.7% or almost 50,000 members.

Trade union density in South Africa is high – close to 40% – a remarkable achievement compared to other developed and developing countries. Still, some of our unions, particularly in the private sector, are battling to represent over 50% of the workers in their sectors. Even in the formal sector, some industries are barely organised, notably agriculture, domestic work, retail and security services.

Casual workers are also not fully organised by the labour movement. The 2003 SACCAWU Shoprite strike was historic for championing the interests of this section of the working class. NUM and NUMSA also concluded deals to protect these workers.

The labour movement remains fragmented with over three federations scrambling for members. Unions are also competing with bogus organisations that seek to represent workers. Some lawyers and unscrupulous individuals



masquerade as trade unions.

The recruitment campaign should contribute towards the goal of organising two million members to achieve the goal of four million members by 2015. Unity talks with independent unions and the other federations are also essential. In practice workers are beginning to act together. Cosatu, NACTU and FEDUSA act together at NEDLAC. NACTU and FEDUSA unity talks are a positive development, though so far they have chosen to exclude Cosatu.

In racial terms, Cosatu still represents the black and predominantly African working class. Increasingly, however, white workers are also joining Cosatu unions. Many still prefer FEDUSA-aligned unions or more recently Solidarity. We need a better understanding of the changing role of white workers in the labour movement. Presumably they are forced by the loss of protection from the apartheid state, which exposes them to the brutality of capitalism from which they have been shielded for decades.

Cosatu is still a male-dominated organisation, despite a sizeable portion of women members. Given the size of its women membership, Cosatu has the potential to form the bulwark of a mass women's movement. It is an ongoing challenge to translate the mass participation of women into an organic force that can pursue women's demands in the workplace and in society.

Visibility and representation of women members in the senior leadership structure has improved somewhat. However, we are far from achieving gender parity, and the advances we have recorded are always under threat. We did not ensure adherence to the quota system adopted by Eight National Congress. Because there are relatively few women in leadership or the shop steward movement, when one leaves they are often hard to replace.

Moreover, Cosatu must still mount significant battles to take forward the aspirations of women workers. Because women's issues are subordinated to the broader strategic goals rather than addressed specifically, the movement is failing to take up gender struggles in earnest.

Cosatu's key strength is its ability to be far-sighted and from time to time reflect on the challenges it faces. The September Commission Report was the first comprehensive analysis of the challenges facing Cosatu after 1994 and how

to confront them. It laid out a bold and ambitious programme for political, social and economic policy reforms, as well as a programme for improving and reforming the organisation. The establishment of the Central Committee is directly linked to the recommendations for the September Commission Report in 1997. The establishment of the Organisational Review Commission in 2000 resulted in an ambitious programme for Organisational Development and laid the foundation for the mid-term vision contained in the 2015 Plan.

In short, despite the many challenges we face today, Cosatu remains a dynamic and vibrant trade union movement that can boast many achievements through its 20 years. Some observers thought that Cosatu would not survive the loss of experienced activists through the 1990s. After all, many other formations of civil society have gone under. In contrast, Cosatu is stronger now than at its founding. Its resilience testifies to the depth of leadership developed over the past two decades and before. It is ordinary members and thousands of shop stewards that keep the federation intact.

Cosatu is the biggest organisation in civil society after the faith-based organisations. It boasts a coherent and vibrant internal organisation and has adapted relatively well to the new dispensation with very limited casualties. It faces many challenges, yet it is willing to confront them honestly, with the sometimes brutally open debates for which it remains famous.

We raise our red flags in salute of countless leaders and members who made an immense contribution to the strengthening of Cosatu. We salute Elijah Barayi, Chris Dlamini, Jay Naidoo and all the national office bearers elected at the founding Congress for laying the foundation that ensured we travel the first twenty years.

As part of these celebrations, we have and we will salute the tremendous role played by our predecessors in SACTU, including its leaders John Nkadimeng, Steven Dlamini, Moses Kotane, JB Marks, Ray Alexander Simons, Vuyisile Mini, Oscar Mpetha, Rita Ndzanga, Gana Makhabe and countless others.

ZWELINZIMA VAVI is General Secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu).

HISTORY

The building of a non-racial trade union movement

In this extract from their book 'Organise or Starve', Ken Luckhardt and Brenda Wall examine the significance of the formation 50 years ago of the South Africa Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU).

For African workers in particular, the emergence of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in March 1955 represented a new thrust in the history of workers' struggles in South Africa. As trade unionist Eric Mtshali described it, "In the factory, the birth of SACTU was like rays of sunshine piercing through the dark".

The "dark" referred the period during which the Trades and Labour Council (T&LC) dominated the trade union movement in South Africa. Although the T&LC constitution had always stated that membership was open to all 'bona fide' trade unions, the needs of the majority of workers, the African workers, had never been properly served by this body.

Apart from the efforts of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in the 1930s and 1940s, and the activities of the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU) in the Transvaal, there had not been any systematic attempt to organise African workers into trade unions. For all progressive-thinking workers and trade unionists, the dissolution of the T&LC therefore opened up new possibilities to determine the kind of trade unionism necessary for South Africa - that based on the principles of equality and unity of all workers in the struggle against class exploitation and national oppression.

From October 1954 until March 1955 a small group of progressive trade unionists threw all their efforts into building this kind of trade unionism. The fourteen unions which had opposed the dissolution of the T&LC, representing workers in shops, chemicals, food, canning, textiles, jewellers, goldsmiths, baking, canvas and rope, tin, twine and bag industries, set up an interim committee immediately following the dissolution.

At its first meeting, the committee passed the following resolution: "In pursuance of our desire to retain the principles embodied in the Constitution of the T&LC (1949) we delegates who attended the recent conference and voted against the resolution to dissolve the SAT&LC, agree on the establishment of a committee whose object shall be (a) to coordinate the future plans of the dissenting unions; and (b) to seek to organise a conference with the object of establishing a Trade Union centre as soon as possible, but not later than April, 1955, based upon the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or creed."

From the beginning, the principles on which the committee was established were stated clearly:

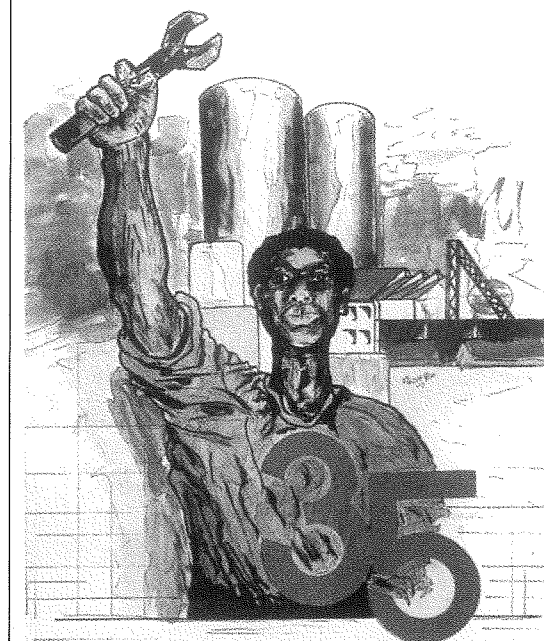
"Only a strong trade union movement can fulfil its task of defending and advancing the workers' interests. Only a united trade union movement can be strong. The interests of the African workers are in the long run no different from the interests of the Coloured, European and Indian workers.

"It is to the advantage of the employers and their government to divide the workers in this country. Workers' salvation lies in unity and it is our duty to bring the knowledge home to our fellow workers.

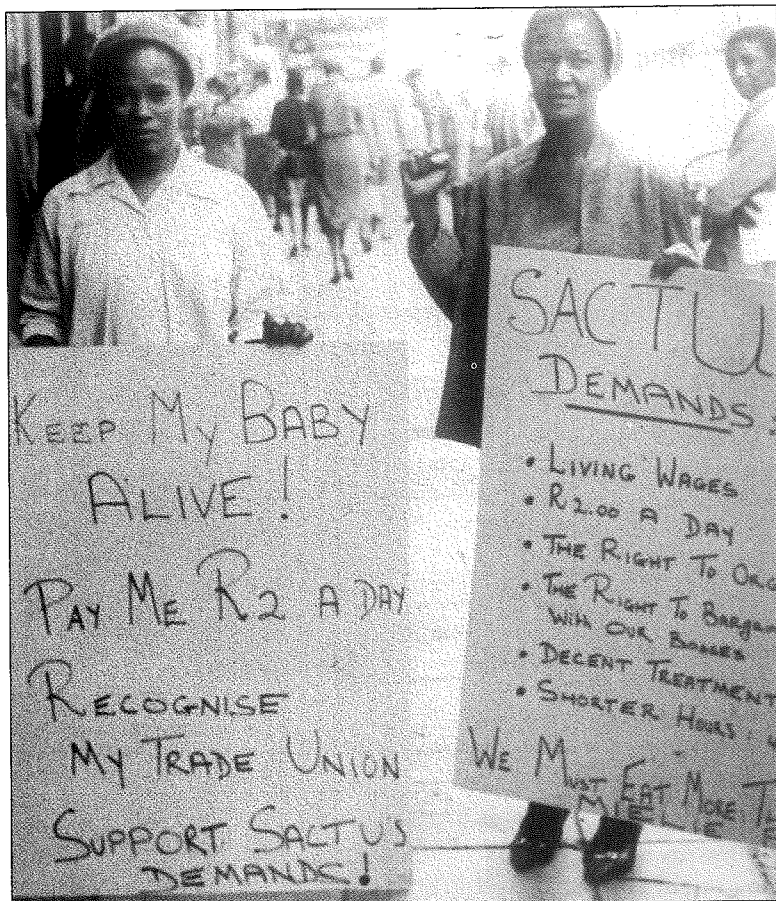
"We are determined to carry on a struggle against the policy of racial discrimination and to work for the achievement of a single Trade Union organization embracing all sections of the working class."

An extremely significant step was taken when the TUCC invited representatives of the CNETU to one of its earliest meetings. At that meeting, a resolution was passed proposing that the planned conference be called jointly by the two bodies. For, although the CNETU had concentrated on

EVERY WORKER A UNION MEMBER



5 March 1955 — 1990 35th Anniversary of the South African Congress of Trade Unions



In injury to one is an injury to all... Here workers are demanding for the recognition of their union.

organising black workers exclusively, many of its leaders had since the mid-1940s seen the necessity for a united trade union movement. Both groups were firm in their commitment to this principle of unity; they refused to submit to the government and employers' attempts to divide the working class along racial lines. In South Africa, to defend this principle required relentless struggle against a ruling class which had continued, by means of specific racist legislation, to smash any such attempts at unity. However, this principle remained throughout as one of the fundamental policies of what became known as SACTU.

The SA Trade Union Council (later TUCSA), on the other hand, accepted the government's apartheid divisions and consciously embarked on a programme of excluding African trade unions from its ranks. In spite of this, the TUCC demonstrated an attitude that also became the basis of SACTU's policy towards TUCSA in later years: "The desire of the Committee is complete unity in the Trade Union movement, and it will endeavour to cooperate with any other body, which though differing on constitutional principles, is pledged to the same end. There is a great measure of common interest between the trade unions associated with this movement and those participating in the work of the Trade Union Council and it is sincerely hoped that close cooperation will be achieved on matters which affect all sections."¹

SACTU'S INAUGURAL CONFERENCE

The aspirations of progressive trade unionists from all parts of South Africa were finally

realised on 5-6 March 1955 in Johannesburg at the inaugural conference of SACTU. Here, a handful of workers announced their intention of organising the enslaved workers in the mines, docks, railways and on the farms, and in every factory and workshop. They announced their intention to attack and bring down the bastion of white supremacy. Some 66 delegates from 33 unions were present, representing a total of 41,253 workers of all races. Three Unions representing 11,350 had observer status and a further 51 representatives attended as either observer delegates or fraternal delegates from other organisations.

By far the largest group of workers represented came from the textile, laundry and food and canning industries. Other delegates spoke on behalf of thousands of workers from a wide variety of industries and concerns throughout South Africa. The conference itself was an exciting and historic event. One of the most significant documents to come out of the deliberations was the 'Declaration of Principles Adopted at the Foundation Conference of SACTU' which laid down the basic principles on which SACTU was built. Part of this document reads as follows:

"The future of the people of South Africa is in the hands of its workers. Only the working class, in alliance with progressive minded sections of the community, can build a happy life for all South Africans, a life free from unemployment, insecurity and poverty, free from racial hatred and oppression, a life of vast opportunities for all people.

"But the working class can only succeed in this great and noble endeavour if it itself is united and strong, if it is conscious of its inspiring responsibility. The workers of South Africa need a united trade union movement in which all sections of the working class can play their part, unhindered by prejudice or racial discrimination. Only such a truly united movement can serve effectively the interests of the workers, both the immediate interests of higher wages and better conditions of life and work as well as the ultimate objective of complete emancipation for which our forefathers have fought.

"We firmly declare that the interests of all workers are alike, whether they be European or non-European, African, Coloured, Indian, English, Afrikaans or Jewish. We resolve that this coordinating body of trade unions shall strive to unite all workers in its ranks, without discrimination, and without prejudice. We resolve that this body shall determinedly seek to further and protect the interests of all workers, and that its guiding motto shall be the universal slogan of working class solidarity: 'An injury to

one is an injury to all'."

During the Conference there was a lively debate over whether to keep the name of the T&LC or whether to change it completely. Those in favour of retaining the name argued that they wanted the new body to "not only adopt the old T&LC policy but this time to carry it out". Those against felt that there would be too many suspicions on the part of workers of the name 'SAT&LC (1955)'. Pious Mei, of the African Tobacco Workers Union, expressed their fears: "It is quite obvious today that we are being asked to go to the cemetery and dig up the ghost of the dead body which was killed in Durban.... We have come here to save the soul and the spirit of the workers, not to pacify those who have deserted us."²

Mark Shope, of the African Laundry, Cleaning, and Dyeing Workers Union, said that the old SAT&LC "did not cater to African trade unions and therefore there should be no association with that body". He moved and Stella Damons (NULCDW) seconded, that the new organisation be called the South African Congress of Trade Unions.³ The vote was taken and the results were thirty-three in favour and twenty-six against, indicating that there was still a lot of sentimental attachment to, or pride in, the legacy of the defunct SAT&LC. Some trade unionists obviously perceived this new body as merely a continuation of the old body, but comments made at the time by African trade unionists indicate that they regarded it as a much more revolutionary trade union body than the SAT&LC had been.

Among the various resolutions passed at this Conference, the one dealing with 'Organising the Unorganised' is particularly significant. If implemented, it too would signify a distinct break from the past practices of the T&LC. The resolution read:

"This Conference affirms that its main task in the coming period is to initiate, stimulate and to undertake the organisation of trade unions where none exist amongst South African workers and to strengthen trade unions which are in existence but require support.

"The Conference recognises that only by drawing into the ranks of organised labour the thousands of workers now unorganised, can the Trade Union movement make its maximum contribution to the working class struggle, for its liberation from exploitation and race discrimination.

"Conference therefore instructs the NEC to take in hand without delay, a practical and determined programme for the recruiting and training of trade union organizers."

In his chairperson's address to the conference, Piet Beyleveld also stressed the importance of

this: "It must further be the task (of this Federation) to organise the vast masses of exploited and unorganised African workers and to educate the workers who misguidedly believe that they can safeguard their own rights while they exclude their fellow-African workers from the struggle."⁴

The tasks facing the newly-created SACTU were numerous and formidable, but the spirit in which the delegates left the conference ensured that the challenge would not be taken lightly. The elected officials entrusted with the responsibility of seeing these tasks carried out were drawn from the ranks of both black and white trade unionists, men and women.

Soon after the Inaugural Conference, in May 1955, the formation of SACTU was strengthened by the principled decision of the CNETU to dissolve and in turn merge with the new non-racial trade union centre. The resolution passed at the CNETU Conference on 5 May 1955 is of historical significance to the progressive trade union movement in South Africa:

"This Conference of the Transvaal CNETU warmly welcomes the establishment of SACTU. We consider that the workers of South Africa, both black and white, have reached the stage where the existence of a national, non-racial trade union coordinating body has become a prime necessity of the workers' movement. It is for this reason that the Transvaal CNETU has taken a leading part in convening and forming the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

"Having achieved the establishment of SACTU, this conference now considers that the historic task of the CNETU has been accomplished and that its proud tradition of leading the struggle of the African workers will now be best carried on by the new national body.

"It is, therefore, hereby resolved that all steps shall be taken without delay to merge the Transvaal Council of Non-European Trade Unions with the South African Congress of Trade Unions and the Executive Committee is hereby instructed to complete the merger in a spirit of brotherhood and solidarity."

THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE

By clearly recognising the link between the struggle for economic gains and the general political struggle, the founders of SACTU were calling upon the workers of South Africa to fulfil their historic role – to become the spearhead in the struggle for national liberation. Rejecting the slogan of 'no politics in the trade union movement', SACTU leaders refused to divorce the struggle for political rights and power from the day-to-day struggle for higher wages and

improved working conditions.

In his address to the inaugural conference, the chairperson explained this clearly: "You cannot separate politics and the way in which people are governed from their bread and butter, or their freedom to move to and from places where they can find the best employment, or the houses they live in, or the type of education their children get. These things are of vital concern to the workers. The trade unions would therefore be neglecting the interests of their members if they failed to struggle for their members on all matters which affect them. The trade unions must be as active in the political field as they are in the economic sphere because the two hang together and cannot be isolated from each other."

Resolutions passed at the inaugural conference dealing with opposition to Bantu Education and the forced removal of Africans from their townships near Johannesburg (the Western Areas Removal Scheme), demonstrated that even at this early stage SACTU was fully committed to the wider issues of national oppression and lack of political rights among the black community. From the outset, SACTU allied itself with those groups involved in the struggle for national liberation in South Africa, led by the African National Congress (ANC), representing the most exploited group. SACTU realised that Black workers were exploited both as workers and as citizens, and that it was crucial to unite with the ANC, the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), the Coloured People's Congress (CPC) and the Congress of Democrats (COD) to overthrow the entire apartheid system.

Hence, a major reason for adopting 'SACTU' as the name of the new organisation was to ensure consistency with the other four Congresses. All five bodies were united together in late 1955 into the Congress Alliance. From this beginning, SACTU recognised that the ultimate aim of the workers' struggle was total liberation, freedom for all people from every kind of oppression and exploitation and the opportunity to build a free and democratic South Africa in which all could participate equally.

In 1955, Dan Tloome, though himself banned from trade union activity by this time, expressed the views of SACTU members: "There are two types of African trade union leaders. On the one hand, there is the union leader who confines himself to trying to obtain the economic demands of his members; on the other hand, there is the trade unionist who sees in the worker a person who is both exploited and oppressed, and realises that in order to improve the position of the workers it is necessary to struggle for both political and eco-

nomic ends. The latter are active members of the liberatory movement and share their valuable experiences with the political leaders."

Even in its first year of existence, SACTU firmly allied itself with the other Congresses and participated in the Congress of the People held in Kliptown, in June 1955, where the Freedom Charter was adopted. This marked the beginning of a close relationship between SACTU and the liberation movement which continued until SACTU's dissolution.

A trade union movement, however, has specific tasks in the struggle. It is a class-based organisation, not representing any one national grouping. SACTU, although an equal partner in the Congress Alliance, saw its major task as that of organising the unorganised workers of South Africa. Only by organising and uniting to defend their common interests against employers and the state, could they gain the strength necessary to win their demands and contribute to the struggle for eventual emancipation from the system of capitalism and apartheid. The major force to be organised to advance this struggle was the African working class, those with nothing to lose but their chains, and everything to gain.

In 1955, SACTU, operating on a shoestring budget, began to organise. From a body which represented an actual affiliated membership of 20,000 workers in 19 unions in 1956, SACTU built up the membership strength to 46,000 in 35 unions by 1959. By 1961, 53,000 workers affiliated through 51 unions to SACTU. After years of struggle and sacrifice, South African workers of all races, but especially African workers, had a coordinating body to represent their interests and fight for their rights as workers.

This is an edited extract from 'Organise or starve! The History of the South African Congress of Trade Unions' by **KEN LUCKHARDT** and **BRENDA WALL**. It was first published by Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1980.

NOTES:

- 1 Quoted in Linda Ensor, 'TUCSA's Relationship with African Trade Unions - An Attempt at Control, 1954-1962', Southern African Labour History, Raven Press, Johannesburg, 1978.
- 2 OA Olsson, Minutes of the Inaugural Conference of SACTU, Trades Hall, Johannesburg, 5-6 March 1955.
- 3 Minutes, Inaugural Conference, SACTU.
- 4 Chairman's Address, Inaugural Conference.

INTERNATIONAL



A triumph of principle, a failure of practice

In his address to the UN Millennium Review summit, **President Thabo Mbeki** asked why the leaders of the world had failed to implement the policies and programmes agreed upon to tackle poverty, underdevelopment and conflict.

SHORTLY before world leaders convened at the United Nations Millennium Review Summit, an important meeting of Christian leaders took place in Washington DC. These leaders issued a communiqué entitled "A Call to Partnership", directed at the Summit Meeting.

In part the call says:

"At the urgent call of church leaders in the southern hemisphere, we came together at the Washington National Cathedral as Christian leaders from diverse traditions and places, both rich and poor, South and North, united in a common concern for those of us living in poverty. We see their faces; we hear their voices; they are a part of us, and we are a part of them.

"As the United Nations reaches its 60th anniversary, we give thanks for its work in peacemaking and global reconciliation, particularly the historic commitment to eradicate poverty in the Millennium Declaration of 2000. Five years have passed, and despite the triumph of principle, there has been a failure in practice. In this communiqué, we offer our partnership to the leaders gathered at the World Summit at the United Nations in building a global movement to make real the promises of the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs) as a crucial step toward a more just world for all God's children.

"We believe that God calls us to place people struggling with poverty at the centre of our concern. Globalisation has brought unprecedented economic growth. At the same time, one-sixth of the world's people still fight daily for survival under the crushing burden of extreme poverty. The increasing concentration of wealth in our world, while so many suffer, is a scandal that impoverishes us all.

"We believe that the spirit of partnership between rich and poor, exemplified in the MDGs, is a way the world can address poverty in all its dimensions. In particular, we support the Goal of a 'global partnership for development' and believe that the churches can make a unique contribution to that partnership."

If nothing else, the fact that the religious leaders who issued this call gathered from many parts of the world to agree on a message to the Summit Meeting must remind us that the masses of the people who elected us entertain high expectations about the United Nations (UN). They see this august organisation as their eminent partner in the continuing struggle to build a better and

humane world.

They challenge us who have the privilege to represent our Member States in the UN, to build, strengthen and direct this world organisation so that it does indeed play its role as an eminent partner of the peoples of the world to construct a better and humane world.

Accordingly, I believe that we must view with the greatest seriousness the conclusion they reached that "five years have passed (since we adopted the Millennium Declaration), and despite this triumph of principle, there has been a failure in practice".

Sixty years ago, in the aftermath of the destructive fury of the Second World War and the villainous genocide committed during this war, the UN was formed, in the words of the Charter of this organisation, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind".

And responding to the universal demand for human and peoples rights, the founders declared that they were forming the UN "to reaffirm faith in the fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small"; and to "promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

As we celebrate the 60th Anniversary of an international organisation established to bring hope to the peoples of the world, we cannot avoid asking some hard questions. This is necessary if we are to live up to our obligation to ensure that the UN discharges its responsibilities described by the religious leaders who met at the Washington National Cathedral, as peacemaking, global reconciliation and the eradication of poverty.

We must ask ourselves how well prepared is the UN today, 60 years after it was established, to:

- save succeeding generations from the scourge of war;
- protect and advance the fundamental human rights of all;
- protect and advance the dignity and worth of the human person;
- ensure equal rights between men and women;
- ensure equal rights between nations large and small; and,
- promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

We must ask the question and answer it honestly, whether what we do as the UN is properly described as "the triumph of principle (and) a failure in practice", as the religious leaders put it.

Some of the reality we face is that 60 years

after the UN was formed, appalled at the ghastly results of the commission of the crime of racism, we are still confronted by the cancer of racism. Although the UN has adopted important decisions on this matter, and convened the necessary conferences to unite the peoples of the world against racism, those who still fall victim to this crime against humanity would find it difficult to cite the instances when the UN came to their aid.

Sixty years after the UN was formed, the indecencies of wars and violent conflict continue to consume the lives of innocent people, evidently because we, the UN, lack the will to live up to the commitment that was made when this organisation was established six decades ago.

As Africans, who have been exposed to many violent conflicts since the UN was formed, we are particularly keen that this organisation must live up to its obligation to save succeeding African generations from the scourge of war. Even as we speak, the UN is faced with the urgent task to take the necessary action in Côte d'Ivoire to help bring a lasting peace to this important African country, opening the way to its reunification, the holding of democratic elections and the promotion of social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, to use the words of the UN Charter.

A similar challenge faces this organisation with regard to the restoration of lasting peace in Darfur in Sudan, building on the historic conclusion and implementation of the Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in Nairobi, Kenya, earlier this year.

Only 11 years ago, we experienced a terrible genocide in Rwanda as well as thousands killed in the internecine conflict that took place in the Balkans. Those who were exposed to the savagery would be fully justified to conclude that the UN had betrayed its commitment to the peoples of the world.

All of us are impatient to see an end to the conflicts in the Middle East, including Iraq, and in particular the restoration of the rights of the people of Palestine, within the context of the successful implementation of the Road Map.

While we welcome recent positive developments in this regard, we must accept the reality that every day that passes without the full implementation of the Road Map only serves to point an accusing finger at us as the UN, that we have not done everything we should, to help secure the just and lasting peace that is the right of the Palestinian, the Israeli and the Arab peoples.

We have all recognised the serious and urgent threat posed by international terrorism to all our nations. We have all accepted the reality that we need a multilateral response to this common

threat. And yet we have still not succeeded to arrive at a common definition of this threat as well as an identification of its fundamental causes.

The issues of non-proliferation and disarmament of weapons of mass destruction are matters of critical concern to all nations, both large and small. And yet we failed to address these matters in the Outcome Document adopted by the Millennium Review Summit, even as the issue of nuclear weapons and their non-proliferation is among the most prominent items in world news and the international agenda. None of us can justly claim that our failure as the UN to take specific decisions on these matters served to enhance global security from the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

With regard to the issue of Iran, we firmly believe that negotiations should resume, and the matter settled within the context of the provisions of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and with the full participation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The gap between the rich and the poor is becoming worse within and between countries as observed by the UN Development Programme Human Development Report 2005, which says that: "...the gap between the average citizen in the richest and in the poorest countries is wide and getting wider. In 1990 the average American was 38 times richer than the average Tanzanian. Today the average American is 61 times richer".

The same report says: "In 2003, 18 countries with a combined population of 460 million people registered lower scores on the human development index (HDI) than in 1990, an unprecedented reversal. In the midst of an increasingly prosperous global economy, 10.7 million children every year do not live to see their fifth birthday, and more than 1 billion people survive in abject poverty on less than a \$1 a day."

Accordingly, if we pause and scan the road traversed to judge whether we have succeeded to save the world from the scourge of war; whether we have built a world that has reaffirmed faith in fundamental human rights; whether we have created a world that has restored the dignity and worth of the human person; a world that has entrenched equal rights of men and women and of nations, large and small, the answer from the majority of the people of the world may very well be a resounding no!

The UN has adopted many decisions intended to help address the various global challenges that have persisted over the 60 years of the existence of the UN. Accordingly, we have the necessary policies to address the social, economic, political

and other problems facing humanity. We have also adopted comprehensive and clear programmes to give effect to these policies, and have identified the required resources for their implementation.

The questions we must answer is why have we not implemented these programmes, and what must be done to correct this situation?

The process of globalisation means that our common world is more integrated today than it was when the United Nations was formed 60 years ago. Similarly, the interconnectedness of the issues of peace, security, development and human rights has never been more pronounced than it is today.

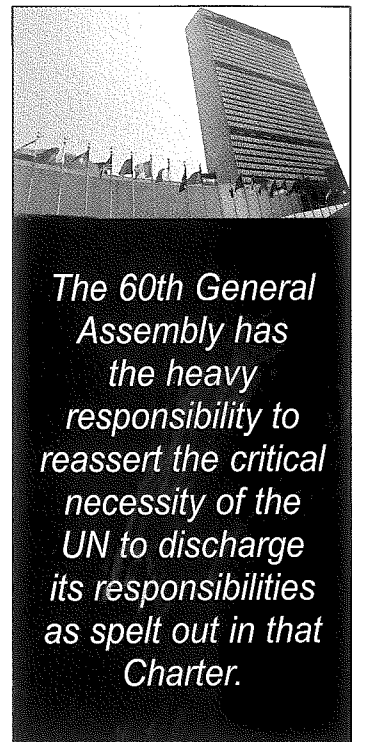
All this means that the imperatives that made it necessary and correct to establish the UN as part of a desirable system of global governance are that more compelling today, and that the necessary reform of the organisation must take place, to ensure that it reflects the new global realities since it was formed, and that it is empowered to respond effectively to the urgent challenges that face all humanity.

And yet the painful paradox we face is that it seems obvious that over the years, there has been a continuous erosion of the authority and prestige of the UN and a sustained drift towards its marginalisation in terms of playing its rightful role as so clearly defined in the UN Charter.

The 60th General Assembly has the heavy responsibility to reassert the critical necessity of the UN to discharge its responsibilities as spelt out in that Charter. Experience over the last 60 years has shown that to address the criticism levelled against this organisation by the religious leaders, of a triumph of principle and a failure in practice, we must be ready to engage in a sustained struggle to ensure that the vision contained in the UN Charter is actually translated into reality.

As we engage in this struggle, we too, like the religious leaders who met at the Washington National Cathedral, should say we are "united in a common concern for those of us living in poverty. We see their faces; we hear their voices; they are a part of us, and we are a part of them".

THABO MBEKI is President of the ANC and South Africa. This is an edited version of his address at the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 17 September 2005.



The 60th General Assembly has the heavy responsibility to reassert the critical necessity of the UN to discharge its responsibilities as spelt out in that Charter.



Western Sahara: The last colony in Africa / Part 2

As the Saharawi people continue their struggle for independence, the democratic movement in South Africa remains resolutely committed to support their struggle until freedom triumphs, writes Nathi Mthethwa.

If the road to social progress is always under construction, the Saharawi people have shown rare resolve to overcome the bends, humps, ditches and detours that have obstructed the road to their destiny.

This is a people who have stood resolute on the matter of fundamental human rights fully conscious of the daunting tasks that confront them. As South Africans, we support their resolve fully aware that as revolutionaries we cannot be confined by national borders in playing our role to change the world for the better. We have an historical obligation to share pain in times of need and together with all peoples of the world to soldier on to overcome such pain. This obligation extends to the celebration in times of happiness

whenever and wherever the spirit of humankind triumphs over evil.

In the words of late ANC President Oliver Tambo: "The ANC is a child of Africa's determination to achieve and enjoy human dignity, freedom and independence; it will never betray that parentage. It is an integral part of the world revolutionary process; it will stay in the revolution until final victory." (ANC January 8 Statement 1984)

The struggling people of Western Sahara regard Polisario Front in the same way as people regard the ANC in South Africa because of a shared historical imperative between the two revolutionary movements.

The issue is not only what you do together as

revolutionaries while in the trenches, but what you further do to remember those who are still struggling when your freedom comes around. In this edition we will reflect on what we raised in Umrabulo 14 on this question, consider the current conjuncture and look at challenges ahead.

REFLECTIONS OF THE STRUGGLE OF WESTERN SAHARA

Africa cannot claim to be free until all her children achieve their self-determination and independence. While we need to commend the role played by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) over decades to free Africa from colonialism, Western Sahara remains as Africa's last colony. It remains colonised by a fellow African country and needs solidarity to gain its independence.

We need to remind ourselves that this is a country that has endured oppression, pain and suffering for more than 400 years. Initially Europeans, Spain and France, took turns in exploiting the Saharawi people. When the peace loving people of the world raised their voice against this oppression they were ignored, since Western Sahara's subjugation was taken as a 'natural gift' for Europe. Spain in particular used dirty tricks and delaying tactics to prevent a free Saharawi. In some instances it compensated Morocco with some parts of Western Sahara at the Saharawi's expense. It created dummy structures like the so-called Saharawi Assembly, Party Saharawi National Union (PUNS), in order to slow down the decolonisation process. Despite all these tricks, Europe finally had to surrender its stranglehold and subjugation of the Saharawi people. This was partly because of the role played by the international community as a whole, through institutions like the OAU, Non Aligned Movement (NAM), and United Nations. Most importantly it was the struggle for freedom led by the Saharawis themselves, especially under their national movement, the Polisario Front, which saw the last bastions of oppression from Europe fall.

MOROCCO'S EXPANSIONIST AGENDA

The most painful indignation experienced by Western Sahara when Spain pulled out of the country was to witness a neighbouring country taking advantage of this situation. Morocco wasted no time in invading Western Sahara, thus beginning a military occupation. Morocco continues to ignore the world's plea for Saharawi independence. Having learnt from Spanish colonisers, the new oppressors embraced fully the tactics delaying the decolonisation process.

Four years ago we quoted Oliver Tambo: "The

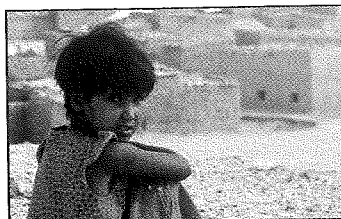
experience of the people of Western Sahara is the first kind of experience that we can think of since the struggle of decolonisation started in Africa. No African country has done like the people of Western Sahara. But, be that as it may, the reality is that Polisario has to fight for the liberation of Western Sahara not from Spain but from a brother African country. We have no doubt that the struggle of the people of Western Sahara will be victorious".

Another African revolutionary giant, the late President of Burkina Faso, President Thomas Sankara once commented on the situation of Western Sahara thus: "We believe that the fate meted out to the people of Western Sahara by the Kingdom of Morocco is intolerable, and we condemn it unconditionally. Morocco is using delaying tactics to postpone the inevitable day of reckoning that will be imposed on it by the will of the Saharawi people. It is clear to me, after having personally visited the regions liberated by the Saharawi people, that nothing will ever again be able to impede their march towards total liberation of their country under the militant and clear-sighted leadership of the Polisario Front".

The world has entered the African Century because of her peoples' resolve to end the negative and inferior images of it portrayed by the North. It is time for the continent to realise her potential economically, culturally and politically. This new epoch is seeing the re-awakening of Africa, with institutions like the African Union and Pan African Parliament driving this process. The fact that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has been accepted the world over illustrates serious strides made by the new generation of African leaders. However, the role played by Morocco in Western Sahara remains a damper on progress on the continent.

But we believe that the winds of change sweeping through our continent will triumph. The ceasefire reached between Morocco and Western Sahara in 1991, as witnessed by UN Resolution 690 of 1991, brought new hope for the resolution of this conflict. But Morocco has always found an excuse to shift the goal posts, including its recent withdrawal from the AU since the latter recognised Western Sahara as a sovereign state. At the heart of Morocco's agenda has been the resolution to hold a referendum to determine the will of the Saharawi people. On this question the government in Rabat has removed the goal posts altogether. While blocking the democratic process, the Moroccan elite continues to claim Western Sahara as its own.

On 16 October 1975 the International Court of Justice concluded that: "The materials and information presented to it do not establish any tie of



The Saharawi people have shown rare resolve to overcome the bends, humps, ditches and detours that have obstructed the road to their destiny.

territorial sovereignty between the territory of Western Sahara and the Kingdom of Morocco". Again on 29 January 2002, the UN, through its Department of Legal Affairs stated that: "The Madrid Agreement (signed jointly by Spain, Morocco and Mauritania on 14 November 1975) did not transfer sovereignty over the territory, nor did it confer upon any of the signatories the status of an administrative power."

James Baker, who was the UN Secretary General's personal envoy until June 2004, said: "I do not know of any country in the world that as a matter of international law, international recognition, recognises Morocco's claim

to the Sahara." He continued "the closer we got to implementing the settlement plan... the more nervous I think the Moroccans got about whether they might not win that referendum."

Many pleas to the Moroccans have fallen on deaf ears. Among the pleas is an open letter written by the President of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, who is also the General Secretary of Polisario Front, Mohammed Abdelaziz. Writing on 4 July 2005 Abdelaziz said, "it is not acceptable that Moroccan forces continue to violate Saharawi human rights on daily basis, for it does not honour the Moroccan Monarchy at all to suppress the freedom of the Saharawis and violate their sanctities and oppress their human rights activists, nor can it be a victory or a courageous deed to kidnap and torture decent peaceful Saharawi women."

THE ANC AND SAHARAWI STRUGGLE

The ANC and Polisario Front have always had fraternal relations and have understood each other as belonging to the world revolutionary movement. Leading a delegation to Western Sahara in 1988, our President Oliver Tambo committed all of the movement's revolutionaries to the Saharawi people's cause: "We, the ANC, will continue to support your struggle by all means necessary, in order for both our causes to triumph." There has been change since Tambo made the commitment. South Africa's cause has triumphed but the same cannot be said about Western Sahara. But the ANC's support for the Saharawi people's cause continues to date, and will continue until theirs also triumphs. In 1996 the ANC Youth League took a congress resolution to pledge solidarity with Western Sahara, which was to further strengthen ties with

Polisario Front's youth wing, UJUSARIO. The ANC's alliance partners, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), have also played their role in lending support both politically and materially to the Polisario Front.

At the ANC's national conferences in Mafikeng in 1997 and in Stellenbosch in 2002, the movement resolved to support processes meant to bring about peace and freedom for the people of Western Sahara.

In 1994 President Nelson Mandela promised to establish full diplomatic relations with the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic. The former President's pronouncement was informed by the fraternal relations the movement has with Polisario Front. This was a well-calculated statement fully conscious of the fact that the ANC was now a ruling party and had to be balanced in its approach. It had an obligation to interact as well with the Kingdom of Morocco. The ANC government therefore had to observe the international processes that were charging both parties to resolve their conflict, through the UN's project of decolonisation. The promise therefore was not an isolated incident but part of the ANC's commitment to solidarity as a major hallmark of a revolutionary movement; it was taking further the commitment made by Tambo to the people of Western Sahara.

A decade after Mandela made this promise, his movement in government, led by President Thabo Mbeki, fulfilled this revolutionary dream of which Tambo spoke. President Mbeki's government officially recognised the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic under the leadership of President Mohammed Abdel-Aziz in September 2004. When we wrote on the subject four years ago we counted up to 75 countries that had given Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic official recognition and diplomatic status. To date we have 80 countries, with Kenya being the latest in recognising the SADR in June 2005.

The ANC's National General Council, held in July 2005, said: "Recalling the ANC's historic support for the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) people's right to self determination and our fraternal relations with Polisario Front, the commission commended the decision by the government to give recognition and humanitarian assistance to Western Sahara (SADR) and urges both ANC and the government to do everything possible to bring a lasting solution to this problem."

NATHI MTHETHWA is a member of the ANC KwaZulu Natal Provincial Executive Committee. The first part of this article was published in UMRABULO 14.

Our intellectual dilemma: battle fields of knowledge

Over the past decade, three different types of 'intellectuals' have dominated public space in South Africa, writes Leslie Dikeni.

THE recent debates and discussions on intellectualism and African intellectualism not only miss the point; they are also narrow in content (as oppose to be universalistic).

They are narrow because they place too much of an emphasis on being African and black. They miss the point because they are not structurally examining the dynamics surrounding the South African intellectual dilemma. Furthermore, they decisively make an assumption that intellectualism is about literary texts only.

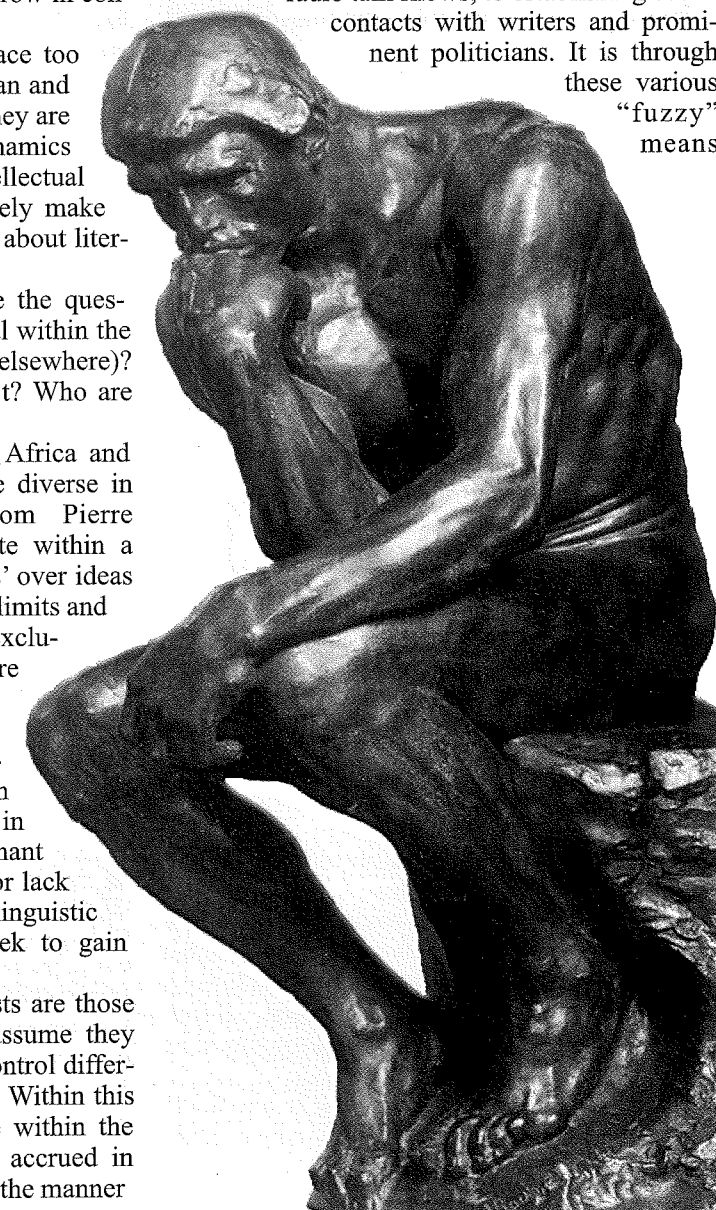
This certainly requires us to pose the questions: What constitutes an intellectual within the South African context (and perhaps elsewhere)? Who is an intellectual and who isn't? Who are the "real" intellectuals?

And this is my point – in South Africa and elsewhere intellectuals vary and are diverse in nature. However, borrowing from Pierre Bourdieu's language, we all operate within a field within which there is 'struggles' over ideas and scientific thought. This field has limits and delimits, there are inclusions and exclusions within this field, and there are furthermore excommunications that takes place with the field.

In a nutshell, one can hypothetically argue that in the South African 'public space' over the past ten years in particular, there has been three dominant types of 'intellectuals'. These are (for lack of better descriptive words) 'the linguistic capitalist', the 'intellectual that seek to gain face' and the 'policy pragmatist'.

The linguistic intellectual capitalists are those intellectuals in South Africa that assume they have a monopoly of ideas and can control different forms of thought as in a market. Within this group there are profits to be made within the intellectual field. These profits are accrued in various different ways, ranging from the manner

of speaking in a public meeting, to conforming to certain standards of conduct in television and radio talk shows, to establishing social contacts with writers and prominent politicians. It is through these various "fuzzy" means



that these groups establish their authority to speak at any time and at any moment. They speak so much that it hardly matters what they say.

The intellectuals that seek to gain face (and not to loose face), simply put, are those that are always in the right place at a particular moment. They are the newspaper columnists that write daily, almost non-stop. They also derive profit through this process. They are on television screens with the right style of dress and have phonetically mastered the language of television producers. They are true "guardians of morality" in contemporary South African society. This implies that scandals are their pet projects, in that they are obsessed with the idea of analysing 'social problems' and treating them as scandals. They never decline television interviews on any topic, regardless of whether or not they are familiar with the subject. One wonders whether if they have any time for reading.

Finally, the pragmatist policy analyst, this is a typical 'board room' player and master of projects. We find them in universities, in government institutions, in the private sector and within the different research institutions mushrooming

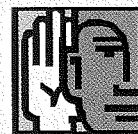
in South Africa. Here we have a typical "guru" and project specialist. The art and skill of writing quick-fix project proposals is something that this group specialises in. For this group, anything conceptual and theoretical, that requires thinking, will be treated with scepticism. Actually publishing anything with this group and its friends within the print media is almost impossible, if not unthinkable. This group also sits on many different boards that require a lot of meetings. One also wonders whether they get time to read and think.

The task of defining an intellectual is not an easy one in these changing times. It requires careful thinking, reflection and perhaps concrete research.

No one has a "monopoly of knowledge" (as the monopolists want us to believe). Knowledge and its dynamics are socially negotiated. Different social actors interact and thus through this process construct knowledge that can be used in different ways to shape society

LESLIE DIKENI is a sociologist and co-author, with William Gumede, of a book called 'The Decline of the Intellectual'.

AN INVITATION TO UMRABULO READERS



READERS OF UMRABULO are invited to submit articles for publication in the Readers' Forum section. Articles may cover any topic considered relevant to the purpose of Umrabulo, including responses to previous articles. When submitting articles, please consider the following:

■ Readers' Forum articles should be between 1,500-3,000 words in length.

■ Umrabulo is aimed at a broad range of people within the ANC and democratic movement, but especially at branch members. Contributions should therefore use plain language. Jargon should be avoided, and specialist terms should be clearly explained.

■ Contributions may be submitted in any South African language. Until resources permit otherwise, however, articles are likely to be translated

into English for publication.

■ Articles should be submitted together with the name and contact details of the author.

■ Articles may be submitted by e-mail, fax, post or by hand.

■ The editor may edit any contributions for length or to ensure clarity.

■ The Editorial Collective reserves the right to decide whether or not to publish a contribution.

Articles may be sent to the following address:

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READER'S FORUM

Strategies and tactics for increasing economic participation

Given the external and internal dynamics of labour markets, South Africa needs to identify strategies and tactics that would increase the flow of skills and jobs to the country and increase employment, writes Tshilidzi Marwala.

ONE of the defining problems of the 21st century is unemployment. Unemployment is a measure of economic exclusion. In line with a vital clause in the Freedom Charter that says 'There Shall be Work and Security!' it is perhaps pertinent at this juncture in our National Democratic Revolution (NDR) to ask: How do we maximise our ability to achieve full employment in South Africa?

To answer this question we need to accurately understand the mechanics and dynamics of the labour market and then use this knowledge to extract strategies and tactics that will advance the cause of achieving full employment and thereby strengthen the NDR. The problem of unemployment cannot be viewed in isolation from the overall goal of the NDR, which is to modernise South Africa and thereby ultimately transform the two-economies to a single developed economy.

The ANC as the vanguard of transformation must ensure, through the consolidation of advanced productive forces and orientation of advanced culture that unemployment is defeated. To achieve this goal the underlying structure of our culture must be re-oriented such that continuous learning, self-improvement, and a sense of mission and urgency to develop this society are at the forefront of the collective consciousness of the masses. As Amilcar Cabral similarly expressed, the ANC as a National Liberation Movement is the expression of the culture of the people and must therefore be ideologically, organisationally and politically consolidated to withstand setbacks and should always be at the forefront of building a South Africa that is significant on the global stage. Indeed throughout its almost a century of existence, the ANC has always put forth leadership that is ideologically equal to the challenges that have confronted the South African people. The point of departure of this article is an analysis of the internal dynamics of the labour market.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS OF LABOUR

Karl Marx noted that the dictum of capitalism is "Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the Prophets!" and this results in a capitalist economy rooted in the desire for growth. This obsession with growth has led some prominent economists and capitalists such as George Soros to question the stability of the capitalist economy. But this issue is a topic of another discourse. The desire for growth is grounded on the need to maximise profit in any economic activity. In order to achieve this growth and thus increase profit, production has to occur.

There are many inputs that go into this production but the major component is labour, whether dead or living. Dead labour is the use of machines as means of production while living labour is the use of people as sources of labour. The choice of which one to use is usually based on which of the two brings more profits in the long run. However, the choice of dead labour over living labour tends to result in more unemployment unless alternative industries that use living labour are created.

For a state the long-term consequences of unemployment on society are catastrophic. So this misalignment between the goals of industries, which is to maximise profit, and of the state, which is to maximise the wealth of the state and thus deliver political, economic and social services to the masses, needs to be delicately managed. For example, industry, in pursuit of profit, may lay off living labour and replace it with machines, and thereby achieve those short-term profits. This increases unemployment, which weakens family structures, promotes a culture of dependency on the state, impoverishes the population, and thereby weakens the state. However, the introduction of such machines may increase production, the wealth of the state and thereby the tax base that can be used to rally political, economic and social services. The potential misalignment between the state and

industry must be delicately managed to ensure sustained dynamics of industry and enhanced attainment of the goals of our democratic state.

If all else is equal, there is a tendency within an economy for labour to move from regions of low wages to regions of higher wages. This creates centres of production that are so over-crowded that they cannot possibly grow economically in any optimal way. The state must therefore ensure that investments are always tilted away from dominant economic nodes that are saturated and therefore cannot possibly deliver the sort of economic growth required to defeat the problem of unemployment to the underdeveloped regions where growth potential is huge. To achieve this goal, policies that reward organisations that conduct business in underdeveloped centres must be strengthened.

INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT OF LABOUR

In an unregulated environment, the most talented people tend to move from regions of low wages (ie. developing countries) to regions of higher wages (ie. developed countries). This guarantees that developing countries remain underdeveloped while developed countries remain developed. Strategies that reverse this trend are fundamentally unnatural. There need to be deliberate strategies that attract and generate high levels of skills. Indeed, the African Diaspora has contributed immensely to building western civilisation and the point of departure of such a tactic must therefore begin with attracting the African Diaspora.

Jobs tend to migrate from regions of higher wages to regions of low wages provided that a certain minimum infrastructure and knowledge base is present in these regions of low wages. This movement is governed by the degree of permeability of the labour market between countries. The relaxation of exchange controls in South Africa was partially aimed at increasing this degree of permeability but it resulted in some unintended consequences, such as capital flight. This permeability of labour depends on economic activity, the exchange rate, the regulatory framework and the cost of doing business.

Scientifically, given the levels of labour permeability between two countries, there can only be one significant direction that governs the movement of jobs. As a country we need to strategise on how to best identify countries with which we have comparative labour permeability advantage and then devise tactics to attract jobs from those countries. To illustrate this point, China has a comparative labour permeability advantage over the USA and South Africa while

South Africa has an advantage over the USA. This means we cannot attract jobs from China but we can attract jobs from the USA. Therefore, our tactic in this case should be how do we best ensure that the diffusion of jobs from United States does not go to China but to South Africa. The active attraction of jobs is necessary because at any given stage of economic development of the world, there can only be a certain maximum number of jobs that can be available.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Given the external and internal dynamics of labour markets, the next stage is to identify strategies and tactics that would increase employment in South Africa. The first stage is to invigorate the internal character of the masses. Firstly, our institutions - whether formal, informal, educational, non-governmental, etc. - must be at the forefront of transforming the mindsets of our masses to put national service at the forefront of their collective consciousness. The masses must be dedicated to their work at all levels and at all times and the spirit of healthy competition must be instilled in the youngest of our society.

We ought to optimise our investment in education. As a country we invest a great deal of our GDP on education. However, our education system is not efficient and thus, if strong interventions are not implemented, it cannot be able to put us on a growth trajectory that will defeat unemployment. For example, our universities on average graduate far less of their intakes in record time than Australian universities. The diversity of our graduates also needs to be optimised. For example, we have far too few of our people following scientific careers that are the backbone of industrialisation and modernisation in relation to those following the arts. We ought to invest heavily in our most talented young people, being aware that their contribution to the modernisation and industrialisation of our country will be huge. We need to send our most talented young people to undertake their studies in both the Eastern and Western countries. We can use strategies such as black economic empowerment (BEE) by enforcing that the BEE process puts resources into a National Education Trust that should be aimed at sending our most talented young people to study in major economic, technological and industrial centres around the world and thus bring back knowledge and technology that is required to defeat the problem of unemployment. China's success is rooted in the number of its most talented young people who are selected by the national selection programme and then sent to the best universities in China

and subsequently deployed in major universities and research centres in the world.

We ought to promote innovation at all levels of our society because growth not supported by innovation is unsustainable. Innovation is the process of turning knowledge into useful products and it is through the manufacturing of useful products on a large scale that the unemployment question will be defeated. For innovation to germinate in our society certain ideal conditions need to be put into place and these are adequate human capacity, an appropriate skill base, correct cultural orientation and a right sense of mission. We cannot become an innovative society unless we properly interrogate what is integral to our cultural mindset and are prepared to change this, if needs be, provided that change will put us on a higher growth trajectory. For example, one negative aspect of our youth culture is its propensity to gravitate towards entertainment to the detriment of the attainment of an innovative society. As a consequence of this, our intervention strategies, whether to promote science or to get the youth to vote, are rooted in entertainment. To be a responsible citizen is a serious matter that should be dealt with, with the seriousness it deserves, and therefore we must always take a long-term view that entails vigorous political, economic and social education to our people at all levels of our society. For example, when one goes to many schools around our country it is common to witness the absence of our national flag hoisted in our schools. How do we plan to create a patriotic, innovative, educated and well-rounded class of cadres without a strong promotion of our nation through measures such as the national flag?

Essential to the defeat of unemployment is the regulation of the flux of jobs between the international labour market and the South African labour market through the regulation of the labour permeability layer between South Africa and other nations.

Labour permeability depends on economic activity, the exchange rate, the regulatory framework and the cost of doing business. Our strategy should be aimed at ensuring that the movement of essential skills from South Africa is kept at an absolute minimum and the flow of essential skills to South Africa is maximised. This can be achieved by increasing the economic activity of South Africa through measures such as vastly increasing the number of educated, productive, strategic, long-term focused and patriotic cadres.

The labour market in South Africa ought to be regulated to ensure that the essential skill pool is widened and deepened. This will require the pro-



gressive forces to look at the long-term goals of South Africa and identify short-term sacrifices that ought to be made in order to strengthen the attainment of our long-term goals. We also need to take a closer look at the feasibility as well as strategies of controlling the exchange rate to regulate investment levels in South Africa. Countries like China regulate their exchange rate and this is specifically intended to increase the movement of jobs, skills and technology from the USA to China. The difficulty is to assess the impact of this on other essential economic variables such as inflation rate and the amount of sacrifice that the society will have to bear. As a society we will not solve the problem of unemployment without extensive sacrifices. Our movement naturally has to be at the forefront of this journey.

The unemployment question will dominate policy-making in the twenty-first century. It will require our movement to balance long-term goals and gains versus short-term goals and gains. These goals are reachable but will require a new form of activism that is responsible, informed, strategic and visionary and which covers all levels of modern society.

TSHILIDZI MARWALA is an associate professor at the University of the Witwatersrand and a member of the Thomas Nkobi Branch of the ANC.

Mechanic plying his trade... our country needs to identify strategies to increase skills and create.

Looking beyond the 'consensus' view of terror

By reviewing the roots of contemporary political Islam, and tracing the foreign policies of successive United States administrations, Mahmood Mamdani seeks to uncover the causes of the 9/11 attacks, writes **Hoosain Kagee**.

IN an era of 'global consensus' as to who the terrorists are, Mahmood Mamdani has undertaken a thought-provoking review of the history of political Islam and the role of the United States in the fostering and mutating of the Jihadis of 2005.

The book is premised on the need to understand the current fight against terrorism within the ambit of political violence as opposed to purely religious violence. The debate on terrorism in the US and the world began in earnest post-9/11. These debates were led by two prominent Americans, writing on two very different platforms on the roots of terror.

The first discourse was by Harvard professor Samuel Huntington in his book, "The Clash of Civilizations". Huntington argues the Cold War was a rather parochial affair and the real war is yet to come. Bernard Lewis from Princeton University, a strong Bush adviser, on the other hand argues that the world was essentially made up of good and bad Muslims. And that bad Muslims were essentially anti-American and good Muslims were pro-American.

Mamdani asserts that he needed to find a much more profound source as to the roots of 9/11. To this end he reviewed three key Islamic scholars that have informed political Islam over the last century.

The first being Jamal Al-din al-Afghani, a product of the Madressa institution in Islam. Al-Afghani essentially argued that the reason why Islam was in a weak state was because of colonialism and that the failure to deal with it continued to weaken Islam. Al-Afghani believed in a people-based society or a society-centred approach to development.

The second scholar was Adul Al Mawdudi, who moved to Pakistan at partition and was looking for a new beginning to Islam. Disillusioned with what was happening in India, he failed to find the salvation in Pakistan. Al Mawdudi viewed political Islam as a state pro-

ject and, more importantly, a way of life.

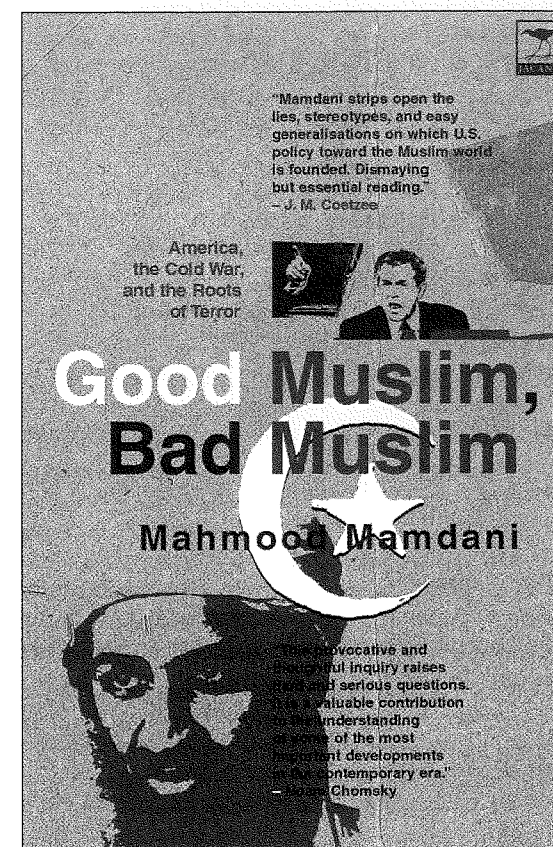
The third scholar was Sayyid Qutb, regarded by many as the key thinker in the sculpting of political Islam as we see it today. In his 1960 seminal work, "Sign Post", Qutb called for the establishment of the Islamic Vanguard. Qutb argued that in Islam you are either a friend or an enemy, the former requires reason and the latter requires force. This thinking by Qutb was not out of line with many contemporary political thoughts of that era. Likened to other armed struggles, Qutb's embrace of political violence was not isolated.

What was interesting for Mamdani was that many of these new thoughts of political Islam emerged from non-religious intellectuals who operated outside the ambit of Islam. But what they were calling for was an army of patriots, soldiers who were not only prepared to kill, but prepared to die for their cause.

But Mamdani was still not convinced that this factor drove the bombers of 9/11. What else infused the bombers to view violence as the only means of changing reality? Was it that their acts of 9/11 would be irreversible and that once a life was taken it could not be brought back again. Surely this was not political Islam.

Mamdani looked elsewhere, starting in 1975. The Cold War had moved from East Asia to Africa. America was defeated in Vietnam, and the anti-war movement had grown very strong. America had to develop a new practice to take forward the Cold War – a proxy war, through organisations like Unita in Angola, Renamo in Mozambique and the Contras in Nicaragua. For Mamdani the roots of terror today must be looked at in terms of the Reagan Presidency and its associated practices.

The intellectual base for this approach was penned by Jeane Kirkpatrick in an article entitled "Dictatorship and Double Standards". This policy drew the distinction between right-wing and left-wing governments. In the case of bad right-



wing governments internal forces were needed to drive change, while left-wing governments required external forces to remove it from power. This thesis by Jeane Kirkpatrick was in direct response to what the US viewed as Russian proxies. Any form of peaceful co-existence with the Soviet Union was viewed as pure capitulation. As far as Reagan was concerned the Soviet Union was an evil empire that needed to be destroyed, as evil cannot be reformed. For

GOOD MUSLIM, BAD MUSLIM AMERICA, THE COLD WAR, AND THE WAR ON TERROR

By Mahmood Mamdani
Jacana Media

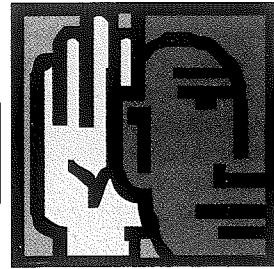
Mamdani it extended to "no matter what the cost".

Mamdani argues that most of the war proxies of the US were secular in nature. However, when it went into Afghanistan, it became a religious war. The Jihadis that gathered for the US-supported war against Russia were recruiters from across the globe; the slogan was the "Russians must bleed white". The US avoided any contact with moderate Muslim groups as it did not want any compromise with the Russians.

Part of the US strategy in Afghanistan was the utilisation of the Madressa system as a political tool. Madressas were institutions of learning – law, poetry, theology, etc. During this period thousands of Madressas flourished, but, as Mamdani indicates, they began to transmute into a militarised institution. These Madressas became cadre development centres for the US against the Russians. Curriculum development for Madressas was developed by the University of Nebraska via a USAID grant of \$50 million, pitting Mujahedeen against Russians in every conceivable subject.

For Mamdani this era in US political relations laid the seeds for the type of backlash we are witnessing in the world today. The reality is that post Afghanistan the Soviet Union reformed. Post Vietnam the US did not reform. For Mamdani the National Security State is still in operation. Today its latest project is the war on terror, its enemy Bad Muslims; tomorrow?

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