



Political Report to the 13th Congress of the South African Communist Party – 11 – 15 July 2012

Taking responsibility for the revolution: Advancing and deepening working class power in all key sites and fronts of struggle

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are meeting at this Congress exactly 5 years since our 12th Congress held in July 2007 in the Nelson Mandela Metro. Indeed as we open this Congress we need to say for all to hear that we are gathered here as South African Communist Party delegates - we are alive, we are well, we are militant! Everywhere across our country, in our region and in international forums our Party's influence is to be felt. Since our 12th Congress we have more than tripled the membership of our Party and it now stands at its highest ever – at over 160 000, from 51 000 in 2007! Not only have we grown the membership of our Party but also we have grown its stature and influence, and it commands the respect of millions of the workers and poor of our country. Indeed we have to focus our discussions at this Congress on enhancing the quality of our membership.
- 1.2 Five years ago, we set ourselves very clear tasks - that of building working class hegemony and influence in all key sites of power, with the priorities being in the economy, the workplace, our communities, in the state, on the terrain of the battle of ideas and in the international sphere. In order to achieve this, we said the Party should have an active presence and influence in all these key sites of struggle. Of course we are deeply aware that communist presence does not automatically translate to working class hegemony in key sites of power. But there can be no working class hegemony built without qualitative and quantitative presence of communists in all key sites of struggle and power. Indeed the growth of our Party is a reflection of the advances we have made on the tasks we set ourselves in 2007. The SACP and its cadres are everywhere, in varying degrees we are in all these key sites of struggle. The key task for this Congress is to discuss how to improve the quality of our presence in all key terrains and fronts of struggle. This we call taking responsibility for the national democratic revolution – we are not a left wing, oppositionist clique observing the unfolding struggle from the outside. We will criticize where criticism is required, but always as active revolutionary participants in the trenches of struggle.
- 1.3 We are also holding our 13th Congress being more united than at any other time post-1990. This unity of the SACP has been achieved mainly through robust internal debate on all questions facing our revolution; common strategic perspectives informed by our Medium Term Vision; an activist SACP driven by its annual programmes of action including our Red October Campaign; and continuous theoretical and programmatic elaboration of the challenges facing our movement in different phases of our revolution.



2. The triple challenge of unemployment, poverty and inequality and the 'second phase of our transition'

- 2.1 In consolidating and deepening of the national democratic revolution it is absolutely essential that we anchor our struggle around tackling the triple challenge of unemployment, together with racialised and gendered poverty and inequality in our country.
- 2.2 These three are deeply interrelated and capture the structural and systemic nature of our challenge. The underlying cause is colonialism of a special type and the continued reproduction of some of its features despite many advances made. At the heart of the triple challenges are the persisting class, gender and racial inequalities underlying South African society, which needs to be tackled in their totality and interrelatedness.
- 2.3 Two weeks ago our ally, the ANC at its National Policy Conference, boldly stated that our national democratic revolution was at a crossroads. Despite important gains since our 1994 democratic breakthrough, our society continues to be characterized by many challenges, above all the interlinked crises of unemployment and racialised and gendered poverty and inequality. Delegates agreed that what is now required is a radical shift, a second phase in the ongoing transition from Colonialism of a Special Type towards a truly united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa. Many SACP cadres contributed actively to shaping this characterization, and to providing content to what is meant by a second radical phase in the national democratic struggle. We stressed the deep interconnections between the political, the social and the economic and the ongoing necessity of transforming the state.
- 2.4 The ANC's characterization of the period we must enter as that of a 2nd phase of transition from colonialism of a special type into a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and more egalitarian society is a welcome development for the SACP. At the heart of this phase of the transition is deepening a radical socio-economic transformation process whose principal beneficiaries must be the workers and the poor of our country. We need to work with our Alliance Partners in ensuring that these Policy Conference proposals become resolutions at Mangaung.
- 2.5 It would be wrong to reduce the tasks of the 'second phase of the transition' only to the economic tasks, fundamental as these may be. For the SACP building working class hegemony in all key sites of power and influence must remain the key strategic objective in the current period. In fact it is these struggles that in themselves can act to mobilise the working class as the leading motive force of the NDR and catalyse the realization of the objectives of the second phase of our transition.
- 2.6 Another key feature of the second phase of the transition must be a more enhanced role of the state in economic development, incorporating strengthening the economic role of the state, not only through state owned entities, but through interventions by the state in directing the private sector towards developmental outcomes and objectives (eg. Legislation on prescribed assets, and community reinvestment for the financial sector). Interventions in this regard has only been limited to what has been regarded as the regulatory role of the state, and we need to go beyond this 'regulatory role' into seeking a more interventionist state to transform the very market and class relations themselves.
- 2.7 The above also means that our economic strategies as a movement must decisively move away from the paradigm of 'lowering the cost of doing business for business' to that of



developmental interventions to restructure our economy to serve the interests of the majority of our people and to subject private capital to the primacy of this objective.

- 2.8 It also means that we must move away from an approach that limits the role of the state to only instances where the market fails. In any case the capitalist market will at all times fail the interests of the workers and the poor.
- 2.9 The SACP strongly supports the call of the ANC Policy Conference to undertake a comprehensive review of macro economic policy framework and its assumptions, in order to ensure that it is aligned to our development goals. In particular we need a macro economic policy that will support our goals of industrialisation and strengthening the manufacturing sector, away from a policy framework that protects the narrow and anti-developmental objectives of an untransformed and predatory financial sector
- 2.10 Indeed realizing the goals of the second phase of our transition is seriously threatened by tenderpreneurship, corruption and the role of dirty money to try and buy our organisations. Part of the renewal of our movement as a whole, must include intensification of the struggle against corruption on all fronts.
- 2.11 If all of us have to fight corruption, we as Communists, more than any other sector of our movement and society, have the greatest responsibility to do so. For it is our constituency, the working class and the poor, that are the main victims of corruption. It is they who lose out the most through corruption.
- 2.12 Yes, corruption is endemic in a capitalist system, but we can't wait for socialism to end it. We must fight it now! As an integral part of our fight for socialism! This means that we must be ruthless in acting against any corruption within our own ranks. We must have zero tolerance for corruption! No member of the SACP can be corrupt! To be corrupt is to be anti-Communist. And as the SACP we must set an example – we must act swiftly and decisively against any of our members who are corrupt. The incoming CC must be mandated to develop a simple, clear, effective strategy to deal with this.
- 2.13 But we must also work with our Alliance Partners and the government in vigorously combating corruption. Among other aspects, we need to strengthen awareness of the negative effects of corruption, ethical conduct and other aspects of a prevention strategy; capacity to detect corruption quickly; anti-corruption structures; and capacity to punish corruption.
- 2.14 But let's be frank! Our movement and government have passed many, many resolutions on corruption and set up many, many structures. What we need is decisive action! We need to stun people who are corrupt! And ensure that this deters others from being corrupt.
- 2.15 Among other things, the movement and government need to:
 - a. Act swiftly and decisively against public representatives and state officials who are corrupt. The more high profile and senior the transgressors the swifter must the action be. This will help to deter those lower in the ranks, and signal that the movement and government are not soft on corruption and mean business.
 - b. Of course, we have to guard against people being politically smeared and the use of false accusations of corruption to settle power struggles, but where there are genuine cases of



corruption for people to answer, they must not be retained on full pay for long periods of time, as is so often the case. They should be suspended without pay within a clear policy framework. Their cases must be heard within a prescribed short period, and if they are acquitted they should be back-paid for the period on suspension. Too many people benefit too much from corruption! We must make it painful for them!...

c. The penalties for corruption also need to be significantly increased.

- 2.16 We don't need more words! We need action! And as a Party of activism, as a vanguard Party, we as the SACP must lead!
- 2.17 It is important that this Congress must further discuss and debate some of the key issues arising out of the ANC National Policy Conference, especially the content of the second phase of our transition, and the necessity for the organizational renewal of not only the ANC, but, as the President of the ANC, Cde Jacob Zuma, put it at the policy conference, the necessity for the renewal of the Alliance itself.

3. Threats to our revolution

- 3.1 When we met at our Special National Congress in 2009, we tasked ourselves with the responsibility of identifying some of the immediate threats to our revolution, including threats from within the ranks of our broad movement. At that Special National Congress, we correctly predicted the pending crisis of global capitalism and its likely impact on the working people and the developing world. At the Special National Congress we also identified what we call the 'new tendency' – new class forces and interests, largely from inside the ranks of our own movement, which sought to capture the liberation movement, by hook or crook, for purposes of narrow capital accumulation – as the principal and immediate threat to the consolidation of both the unity of our movement and deepening the NDR.
- 3.2 At that Special Congress we were virtually alone as the SACP in identifying this threat in the movement. We stood our ground such that we are indeed very pleased that as we gather at this Congress, we are no longer on our own, but our movement has not only identified but also decisively acted on the core element of this new tendency. In other words we have been proven right! To deepen the struggle for the unity of the revolutionary forces requires that we defeat corruption, tenderpreneurship and the role of dirty money in our movement and revolution. To defeat all the regressive practices and ideologies within our ranks requires firmness, principle, boldness and political clarity. This is another principal contribution that this Congress must make in deepening the national democratic revolution in the current period.
- 3.3 Our revolution is also faced with the threat of what we can call the creeping 'Americanisation' of our politics, coming from a variety of sources. The first, are attempts to change our internal leadership electoral processes to some kind of US Presidential primary elections. This manifests itself through, amongst others, impatience with adhering to our long-standing organizational procedures and protocols, and instead seeking to open such elections as some kind of individual beauty contests and parades. Like in the US, it is also often moneyed interests and individuals who are trying to push our movement and organisations in this direction. We must resist this!
- 3.4 The second is this liberal notion of 'civil society', which is presented as being the best custodian of our democracy, with the demonization of the state as inherently bad, corrupt, predatory and



not to be trusted. This manifests itself in the mushrooming of issue-based non-governmental organisations, funded in the main by foreign and imperialist donors, often under the claim that our democracy and constitution are under threat. These claims are then used to fund these NGOs, a number of which are actually pursuing a political agenda to discredit, if not dislodge, our movement from power. Whilst not all of the NGOs are pursuing this agenda, we must nevertheless be alive to an oppositionist agenda disguised as defence of our constitution. Often it has been through the funding and mobilization of so-called 'civil society', backed by mainstream media, that imperialism has sought to dislodge revolutionary movements from power.

- 3.5 Linked to the above, is increased litigation of virtually all major government decisions, often as an attempt to create an unelected parallel government accountable only to the unelected boards of many of these organisations parading as custodians of our democracy and constitution. Of course we are a democracy that must allow a variety of views to express themselves, but at the same time we cannot be blind to this agenda that seeks to undermine and subvert the fundamental principle of our democracy, that the people shall govern!
- 3.6 But comrades, we must also admit that often these agendas are exploiting our own weaknesses. Part of taking responsibility for our revolution must be paying closer attention to mass mobilization and the building of organs of people's power on the ground. In addition, we need to pay increasing attention to the battle of ideas.

What therefore are the principal tasks of this 13th Congress?

- 3.7 The overall task of this Congress is to decide on how to strengthen the SACP as the vanguard party of the working class and how to mobilise the working class to deepen its capacity to take far greater responsibility for the national democratic revolution, in alliance with other progressive classes and strata. Taking responsibility for the NDR, means we must do so together with our Alliance partners, and all other progressive forces for change in society, especially those representing the mass of the workers and the poor of our country. It is the working class that must lead the other progressive classes and strata for the NDR to be deepened and it is towards building the hegemonic role of the working class in the NDR that the SACP must contribute more effectively. How to ensure this is the main overall task of this 13th Congress.

4. The working class as the leading motive force of the national democratic revolution and socialism

- 4.1 As we gather here we need to assert once more that the working class is the leading motive force of the national democratic revolution. The characterization of the working class as the leading motive force of the national democratic revolution is not simply a convenient label or a claim. It implies substantive responsibility that must be taken seriously. It is not an award in a competition or a beauty contest or something to be claimed for opportunistic reasons.
- 4.2 In Marxism-Leninism the working class is described as such because of its own potential (underline potential) to lead the most thorough and revolutionary transformation of society in its quest for the end to its own exploitation as a precondition to end all other forms of oppression. It was Marx who first articulated the potential of the working class as the most revolutionary force



for change, and specifically as the principal agent to destroy capitalist society and establish a socialist society. In articulating this perspective, Marx was basing himself on a close study of working class struggles in Europe and other parts of the developed world where the working class had matured through the development of the capitalist productive forces.

- 4.3 It is therefore important that we start reminding ourselves about who we are as the SACP. We are the political party of South Africa's working class, seeking to represent the most advanced elements from within its ranks. We are a Marxist-Leninist Party, but an African Marxist-Leninist Party. More particularly, a South African Marxist-Leninist Party, rooted in the realities and trenches of the South African revolution. We are not a Marxist-Leninist non-government organization or some sectoral workers' organization. We are a party that is deeply interested in political power, we seek to be the political organizational form of the most advanced elements of the working class. We are a party for socialism and eventual communism, that is, the eradication of the capitalist system and an end to the exploitation of one person by another.
- 4.4 For the working class to lead as a motive force in the national democratic revolution, it needs to be organized to act as such, as a disciplined political force. For the working class to be organized as a political force, the SACP has a crucial role to play, as a vanguard party of the working class, to build the class as such.
- 4.5 As we gather at this Congress, the principal task facing the working class in the current period is that of taking responsibility for the national democratic revolution as the most direct route to socialism. Taking responsibility for the revolution also means building the capacity of the working class not just to lead itself, but to lead society as a whole. We need to remind ourselves what cde Joe Slovo said in 1988, which still remains relevant: :

“The working class cannot play the key role by merely leading itself and sloganising about its historic mission. It must win popular acceptance on the ground as the most effective champion of the democratic aspirations of all the racially oppressed groupings. It must work with, and provide leadership to, our youth, women, intellectuals, small traders, peasants, the rural poor and — yes — even the racially-dominated black bourgeoisie, all of whom are a necessary part of the broad front of our liberation struggle”.

5. The Communist Party as the Vanguard Party of the Working Class

- 5.1 Great emphasis was placed by Marx and Engels, not just on the organization of the working class, not just in any form of organization of the working class if it is to destroy the capitalist system, but on a specific political organisation – a Communist Party. Note what was said in *The Communist Manifesto*:

“The Communists are distinguished from other working class parties by this only: 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole”.



5.2 Then they conclude poignantly:

“In short the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things... In all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time”.

5.3 Some of the critical points that clearly emerge about the working class and the communist party, are the necessity to organize both on domestic and international fronts, the absolute importance of the political organization of the working class and its relation to workplace organisation, and the need to take into account national conditions in each national sphere of struggle, the imperative of communists not to isolate themselves as a narrow clique, but to be active within ‘every revolutionary movement’, without abandoning the fundamental objectives of the working class to abolish capitalist property relations.

5.4 Slovo expresses the same perspectives within a South African context:

“We must also ensure that the working class emerges as the politically-dominant social class in the post-apartheid state. This can only be achieved if the working class wins a place now as the leading social force in the inter-class liberation alliance.

“But, it is not only to ensure a post-apartheid advance towards socialism that the role of the working class is crucial. The immediate objectives of real national liberation as envisaged by the ANC and SACP and whose goals are embodied in the Freedom Charter cannot be effectively fulfilled without the organised strength and leadership of the working class. ... (If) the working class isolates itself from the alliance the result would be to dilute the content of the national democratic revolution, to hand over its direction to the other class forces and, in the long term, to hold back socialist advance.

“A strong trade union movement and a workers’ political vanguard such as ours are essential conditions for the kind of victory in the democratic revolution which will find a working class equipped organisationally and ideologically to assert its historic role. But we emphasise again that there is both a distinction and a harmony in the character and roles of these two vital sectors. Each has a specific role to play in advancing the interests of our working class as an independent social force and as the leading class in the immediate struggle to build a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa”.

5.5 A key task in the radical deepening of the NDR (as called for in the ANC’s National Policy Conference) is for the working class not to hijack, but to take increasing responsibility for our revolution. For the working class to act as the principal motive force of the national democratic revolution it must be better politically organized. Much as the mass organs of the working class (like the trade unions, workers’ co-operatives and other such mass formations) are absolutely essential as organized components in the working class struggles, it is only when the working class is organized as a political force that it can truly act as a motive force for the revolution.

5.6 The political organization of the working class is also important as part of developing its own capacity to lead other progressive motive forces in society. It is an illusion to think making demands rhetorically in our own ranks alone will achieve the radical shift that is now required in the national democratic revolution. We must struggle more broadly and seek to win the widest possible sections of society behind the idea of a radical shift.



5.7 It is of utmost importance that the SACP must recruit directly from the progressive trade union movement and seek to engage with the working class in its own right. It is also within this context that the relationship between the Party and the organized trade union movement is critical. This is a special relationship we must do all we can to defend and deepen, as it constitutes, especially in our conditions, a key foundation and leading axis in the struggle to deepen the NDR and for socialism. In our own context this is a relationship that we can proudly claim as the direct product of decades of communist work in, and with, the trade union movement – from the ICU of the 1920s to the formation of COSATU in 1985.

5.8 However, despite the necessity for a special closeness between the Party and the trade union movement, the two are not the same, and should at no stage be treated as if they are the same. Comrade Slovo, amongst our leaders, articulated this very clearly in 1988:

“A trade union is the prime mass organization of the working class. To fulfill its purpose, it must be as broad as possible and fight to maintain its legal status. It must attempt, in the first place, to unite, on an industrial basis, all workers (at whatever level of political consciousness) who understand the elementary need to come together and defend and advance their economic conditions. It cannot demand more as a condition of membership. But because the state and its political and repressive apparatus is an instrument of the dominant economic classes, it is impossible for trade unions in any part of the world to keep out of the broader political conflicts.

“Unlike a trade union, a workers’ vanguard does not, and should not, have the character of a mass movement... An attempt to apply trade union organizational practices to such a vanguard would spell the end of revolutionary political leadership in our conditions. Equally, the trade union movement would be doomed if it attempted to act like a Communist Party”.

5.9 For the SACP to play its truly vanguard role, it must seek to forge relations with, lead and unify all the components of the working class, not only its most organized or immediately most advanced. Unlike in advanced capitalist countries, where the primary form of workers’ organization has for over a century been the trade union movement (although this is changing), in developing countries the working class has historically been more fragmented or even underdeveloped in many instances. Despite the fact that South Africa has the most advanced, industrially developed and mature of the working class on the African continent, our conditions have also reproduced a fractionated working class that is differentially located in the capitalist division of labour and in the broader capitalist economy itself. It would therefore be suicidal for the communist party to only focus on the organized section of the working class, and to neglect other forms of predominantly working class organization (including the ANC itself, and a range of sectoral, including faith based, civic and community based formations) – let alone the mass of unorganized workers.

5.10 The unemployed (especially those coming in and out of formal employment, and also still actively looking for jobs) are a critical component of the working class that must be given attention by the Party. In addition, there is an increasingly marginalized fraction of the working class, as a result of retrenchments, casualization, outsourcing and labour brokering of the working class (eg. farm and domestic workers). This would also include those sections of the working class eking out a living on the margins of the capitalist economy (eg hawkers).

5.11 The necessity for the Communist Party to recruit and help organize and unite all components of the working class is also informed by the reality that where the working class is fragmented



there will always be the danger of emerging if momentary conflicts amongst the various fractions of the working class, often exacerbated and exploited by employers and reactionary populists of all shades. For example, there will be tensions that now and again arise between employed and unemployed workers, amongst different sections of marginalized workers (eg casual workers and unregistered workers from the region), etc. It is the principal task of the SACP to ensure that these tensions and different short-term interests of the various sections of the working class are not allowed to descend into permanent divisions.

- 5.12 It must also be a primary task of the SACP to organize the working class in the different fronts in which it is found, or in which it has created its own organisations. This must include co-operatives, stokvels and burial societies, residents or civic organisations, and in a number of other areas where the working class is found. In many ways the SACP has grown its membership, influence and prestige over the last decade precisely because it has taken up working class campaigns and issues in many of these fronts, whether it be through the financial sector, land, agrarian, transport and health campaigns. The SACP must deepen its work on all these fronts as part of playing its own vanguard role. In short, whilst working class organization in the workplace is the primary form of mass working class organization, working class organization must not be restricted only to the workplace, and the SACP has a hugely important role to play in this regard.

6. Our Medium Term Vision: An assessment and tasks ahead

- 6.1 Our 12th Congress adopted the 'South African Road to Socialism' as the programme of the SACP for the next five years. At the core of SARS has been our medium term vision – building working class hegemony in all key sites of power and influence – with priority being given to building working class hegemony and influence in the state, the economy, the workplace, the community, ideologically and in the international sphere.
- 6.2 It is therefore only proper that in evaluating our work over the past five years, focus should be on assessing achievements and challenges in our MTV. It should also be within this context that our work in the Alliance must be assessed.
- 6.3 If the aim of our Special National Congress in December 2009 was to assist our broad movement to understand the global capitalist crisis, the reasons for the persistence of structural unemployment and racialised poverty, and the challenges facing our movement since Polokwane, this Congress must focus on what is to be done to consolidate, defend and advance our revolution. It must be a Congress about how we take greater responsibility for our revolution, building on advances and breakthroughs made in order to tackle the current challenges. It cannot certainly be a Congress about lamentations, and about picking and choosing when and how to be part of the revolution. It also cannot be a Congress where we shout from the rooftops and seek to lecture to the leadership of the movement, as if we ourselves are not part of that movement. It must be about taking responsibility for both the advances, and the challenges and problems of the revolution.

The state as a terrain of struggle

- 6.4 When we met at our 12th Congress, there were still intense, often debilitating debates about the role of the state in the national democratic revolution in general, and in the economy in



particular. Since that period, of course, some significant changes and policy breakthroughs have taken place.

- 6.5 The identification of five priorities for our movement and government, the adoption of an industrial policy action plan, the New Growth Path, the NDP, notwithstanding some inadequacies – all represent important advances at a policy level for our overall strategic tasks of transformation. Of late, the massive infrastructure plans announced by government have, at least in conceptual and policy terms, redefined the role of the state in the current phase of the national democratic revolution. Underpinning these policy breakthroughs has been an assertion of the role of the state and the need to build its capacity to drive development – which is a far cry from the conceptions and practices of a minimalist state of the 1996 class project.
- 6.6 However, despite these changes in perspectives there is still a vast difference between commitment to building a developmental state and the existing capacity of the state to drive development. The weaknesses in the capacity of the state relate to a number of interlinked challenges, including the kind of state apparatuses we inherited from the fragmented apartheid state, particular challenges in the local state, tenderpreneurship and use of state power for purposes of narrow personal accumulation. Other critical challenges include the lack of skills and a sufficiently advanced consciousness among public service about their developmental role in the state.
- 6.7 As the SACP we have always stressed the importance of local government in advancing and deepening the NDR and creating the conditions for socialism. In particular, we have emphasised the opportunities for mass participation in local government through ward committees and other structures. Since our last congress, as with other sections of the state, there have been strengths and weaknesses in the performance of the local state. Our 2009 December Special National Congress and subsequent Central Committee meetings discussed local government at some length and agreed on an approach consistent with our NDR and socialist goals. This Congress needs to take these decisions forward.
- 6.8 Here we will only, very briefly, note:
 - a. We welcome the ANC Policy Conference focus on the dialectical relationship between deepening the NDR, forging a developing state and establishing a more integrated cooperative governance system, in which national and provincial government work much closer with municipalities in ways that strengthen local government, not erode their powers and functions.
 - b. We fully support proposals to strengthen ward committees as part of strengthening community participation in local government generally.
 - c. While recognising that infighting within the ANC-led movement sometimes precipitates service delivery protests, we feel that all three spheres of government need to work far more effectively together in responding to the legitimate concerns expressed by residents during these protests.
 - d. We need to considerably strengthen the capacity of councillors who are SACP members so that they contribute more effectively to local government and link this to their tasks to deepen the NDR and advance the conditions for socialism.



- 6.9 Both these advances and challenges underline the correctness of the SACP perspective that as part of a liberation movement we need to effectively combine both mass and state power to drive transformation, as well as for the working class to wage its struggles both inside and outside the state.
- 6.10 The critical challenge in building working class hegemony in the state is that of building the capacity of the state as a national democratic state and to intensify the fight against corruption on all fronts. The fundamental challenge of our revolution in relation to the state is that faced by many liberation and progressive movements in power – what the ANC calls ‘sins of incumbency’ –the emergence of new class interests that are at variance with the goals of the liberation movement, but aimed at capturing the movement and the state for purposes of narrow capitalist accumulation. Such interests are often in alliance with and backed by imperialist forces whose interest is the reproduction of a neo-colonial order. It is the defeat of this tendency and class interest both in the state and in our movement, which is one of the important tasks of the revolution as we gather at this 13th Congress. This is not the task to be tackled only by this Congress, but also by both the COSATU congress and the ANC conference later this year.
- 6.11 Contrary to what our liberal and other detractors often say, it is not inevitable that once a liberation movement reaches some two decades in power, it will inevitably begin to decline. Whilst many promising liberation movements were defeated after a decade or so after winning independence and ascendancy to state power, mass mobilization and the principled waging of a struggle to advance the interests of the majority of the people, both inside and outside the state, are the key guarantors that the revolution is not sold out. It is the challenge of building a revolutionary state and defeating attempts to build a ‘tendered’ state. It is about defeating moneyed interests seeking to capture the state and the movement at any and all costs.
- 6.12 It is for these reasons that it would be suicidal for the SACP to think of itself as a political party whose only interest is outside the state. Often the very forces that berate the SACP for being in the state are the very same forces that seek to capture the state for moneyed and other interests or have themselves developed new interests in private accumulation.

Economic Transformation

- 6.13 The struggle to build a national democratic state is deeply interlinked with the struggle to transform and put our economy on a new growth trajectory, away from the current semi-colonial growth path with many features of colonialism of a special type. For the SACP the struggle for socialism is a struggle for the all-round structural transformation of our society including the transformation of the state and the economy.
- 6.14 The fundamental challenge of our revolution is that of an economy whose structural features are those of colonialism of a special type. Even attempts at building a new layer of the bourgeoisie from within the sections of the previously oppressed, has largely seen the creation of a highly dependent, if not compradorial, bourgeoisie, not necessarily tied to a metropolitan bourgeoisie, but dependent on a domestic white bourgeoisie. In many ways the BEE policies have benefitted a tiny minority of the black bourgeoisie, whilst continuing to benefit (from state tenders and other business) significant sections of the established capitalist class.



- 6.15 The structural challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment in our country largely have to do with the semi-colonial path of our economy. The global capitalist economic crisis is impacting upon and reinforcing the key socio-economic challenges we face in South Africa. The state's flirtation with neo-liberal policies from 1996 did nothing to change the trajectory of our economy, but instead deepened the many semi-colonial features of our economy. Very many of the problems pointed out by the government's National Planning Commission are problems that were largely created or exacerbated by neo-liberal economic policies pursued by government from the middle of the 1990s. It is therefore important that we learn the appropriate lessons from our neo-liberal experiences of the recent past.
- 6.16 Over a hundred years of skewed development have left us with a hugely challenging and deeply embedded legacy. That is why for us as the SACP the NDR is not a stage in which capitalism has to be completed. The transition to capitalism happened long ago in our country, and therefore the NDR is a struggle to overcome deep-seated and persisting racialised inequality and poverty in our society – a struggle which can create the conditions for socialism.
- 6.17 Nevertheless these challenges must never make us lose sight of the advances we have made since our democratic breakthrough in 1994, and those especially made since our last Congress. A correct approach for revolutionaries is not to lament about these problems or use them in a populist fashion for short-term political gain. The challenge of true revolutionaries is to recognize advances and mistakes that we have made and seek to build on these in order to address existing challenges.
- 6.18 In particular, since the ANC Polokwane conference, we have seen some important policy breakthroughs and other achievements. Amongst these are the following:
- a. The development of an overarching industrial policy, within the context of proposals for a new growth path. This new policy emphasizes the need to beneficiate our mineral wealth, rebuild the manufacturing sector as part of the industrialization of our economy and take job creation to higher levels
 - b. A clear move away from emphasis on privatization of the early 2000s to a commitment to a more active role by the state in economic development. It is for this reason that the SACP supports the move for the creation of, amongst other things, a state mining company and the amendment of the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Development Act, in which licencing and prospecting rights are more forcefully used to leverage industrial policy and job creation objectives. The SACP strongly supports the proposed mining resource rents tax (a windfall profits tax) and the establishment of a sovereign wealth fund to ensure that the mining houses do not simply over-exploit our non-renewal resources and disinvest super-profits during resource booms and retrench during downturns. We need to leverage off our mineral resources so that they become, truly, wealth that belongs to all South Africans.
 - c. A clear commitment by the ANC and government to move away from the 'willing seller, willing buyer' model of land reform, to a more radical redistribution of land, including expropriation as provided for in our constitution. This has been a call by the SACP since we launched our land campaign some eight years ago. Let us use this campaign to mobilise the workers and the poor behind faster and more equitable land reform, based on laying the basis for productive small-scale farming including cooperatives for job-creation, sustainable livelihoods and food security.



- d. The major state-led investment in infrastructure as announced by the President in the 2012 State of the Nation address responds to a call that has long been made by the working class for more investment in infrastructure. The key task of the working class is to ensure that monies invested in infrastructure are not stolen by tenderpreneurs who want a quick buck out of shoddy work.. It is also important that we mobilise to demand that all companies that win major infrastructure projects from government must not use labour brokers and must also be committed to the training and skilling of workers.
- e. Since Polokwane, government is now embarking on a pilot for the implementation of the National Health Insurance (NHI) a long standing call by the SACP in particular when we launched our campaign on health for all around 2004-5. This is a very important victory of the working class, and the NUM must also make sure that the NHI pilots in the mining industry and communities do indeed become a success.
- f. The ANC and our Alliance have now prioritized education as an apex priority of the five priorities. Government has already embarked on important measures to improve access to education for the poor. For instance, now more than 60% of our schools are no-fee schools, and more than 8 million students benefit from the school nutrition scheme. In addition, FET college education has become free for students who come from poor families if they are studying occupation-related programmes – a first in the history of our country!
- g. Government is already undertaking a review of BEE in order to ensure that it is aligned with our overall industrial and growth strategies and that it is indeed truly broadened to benefit the majority of our people.

6.19 In the run up to our 12th Congress the SACP also called for other interventions in order to ensure that we deepen economic transformation. These include:

- a. Deepening and taking forward the struggle for the increasing socialization of the finance sector, through, amongst others, achieving a much greater developmental, working class biased, strategic control over key public and social financial institutions and funds. Efforts to transform the developmental finance institutions like the Land Bank, the Post Bank, the DBSA and the IDC must be strengthened. We are also going to intensify the struggle for workers to have an effective say over the investment of their pension and provident funds. For instance, given the trillions of rands in these funds, there is no reason why workers cannot access affordable housing finance for decent housing.
- b. The SACP is also calling for effective state support for the co-operative movement, including setting aside certain functions in the state (eg. school nutrition, cleaning services, etc) exclusively for cooperatives.
- c. The SACP is also calling for the strengthening of the key parts of the state to once more play an active productive role, for instance in rebuilding the capacity of the Department of Public Works and municipalities to construct houses and other social and public infrastructure and limit tender-driven projects.

6.20 In addition we must build on the advances made at the ANC Policy Conference, including the commitment to radical socio-economic transformation and an increased role of the state.



The workplace

- 6.21 A major challenge facing the trade union movement, and indeed our revolution as a whole, is that of defending workers' rights and building strong trade union organization in the workplace, especially in the private capitalist sector. Over the last five years, there has been an acceleration of the capitalist restructuring of the workplace, especially through casualization and labour-brokering. This restructuring has had a major impact on the strength of the trade union movement in many sectors of our economy, especially in the services, hospitality, agriculture and related sectors whose workers have become more vulnerable.
- 6.22 The impact of this massive restructuring of the workplace has also placed in danger the existence of significant sections of the trade union movement itself. In fact the growth of the trade union movement over the last five years has been more in the public than the private sector.
- 6.23 The trade union federations in our country, especially our ally, COSATU, must develop a comprehensive campaign to strengthen the trade union movement in the workplace through, amongst others, focusing on fighting casualization and labour brokerage as a daily struggle in the various workplaces, rather than a subject of periodic national strikes. This is a struggle that must be fought and won through intensified workplace struggles.
- 6.24 In tackling the challenges facing the workplace we also need to ask some serious questions about the state of the trade union movement in South African today, including its strategies to confront the huge restructuring of the workplace undertaken by the capitalist class over the last one and a half decades. Could it also be that our reaction to attempts to relegate the role of the trade union movement by the 1996 class project to workplace issues unintentionally led to bending the stick too much in the opposite direction; that is, focusing on broader political struggles at the expense of workplace organization? Could it also be that good trade union organization has declined, in the same way as mass organization has taken a knock after 1994?
- 6.25 There is also an emerging threat for our progressive trade union movement, where there are elements bought by bosses and tenderpreneurs to divide and weaken the trade union movement as part of capturing these unions and turning them into sweetheart unions. The most aggressive version of this tendency is to be found in the offensive directed against the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). Often what we see is collaboration between employers, the new tendency and business unionists as part of this offensive. It is the duty of the SACP to defend the unity and militancy of the trade union movement against all tendencies aimed at weakening it, including from all forms of counter-revolutionary activities directed at the trade union movement.
- 6.26 In the light of the above challenges, this period calls for intensified and renewed focus by the trade union movement on workplace organization, service to members and return to the basics of trade union organization. The strength of any trade union lies in strong workplace organization and not in the shouting of progressive slogans not accompanied by strength in the workplace. Of course trade union organizing must also develop with the times and be able to deal with more sophisticated ways of destroying worker power in the workplace by employers. The SACP calls for a renewed focus on workplace organization by the whole of the progressive trade union movement and a return to the basics of organization and service



to members. Communists in the trade union movement must prioritise this work as part of building a red trade union movement.

The community

- 6.27 Our Red October Campaigns have, amongst our other campaigns, become a key platform to mobilise communities behind progressive transformation of society and our living spaces. It is essential that the SACP continues with and deepens our Red October Campaign, with this Congress also discussing the possibility of using our 2012 Red October Campaign to revive our campaign against corruption as a mass campaign, intensifying the struggle against tenderpreneurs and all other forms of corruption both inside and outside government and our own organisations: including exposing the dirty money that is used to buy and sell our movement, and defending the revolutionary values of our movement. The struggle against corruption must cut across all our pillars of our MTV, and in all the work we do as the SACP. The struggle against corruption must also be an integral component of the struggle for fostering progressive moral values in our communities. It is absolutely essential that we resist recolonisation through an imposition of liberal moral values that wants to tell us what art, culture and morality is.
- 6.28 Our Red October Campaigns must also be integrally linked to our ongoing Know Your Neighbourhood Campaign. Similarly, we need to liberate the struggle against corruption from becoming a donor-driven and resourced NGO campaign, but to root it amongst the mass of the workers and the poor of our country. Whilst progressive NGOs have a role to play in the struggle against corruption, this must nevertheless remain a mass campaign! It is through the intensification of this campaign, amongst others, that our communities can continue to have confidence in our movement and revolution.
- 6.29 An important front of struggle highlighted in our Draft Programme is that of communist work in the areas of culture, performing arts and sport. It is incorrect to leave these areas to only those we regard as 'cultural activists'. Many communists are cultural and sports activists, and we must seek to recruit more communists from the ranks of the performing arts and sport. Communists must be champions for amateur sport as part of broader community participation in sporting activities as well as the decommodification of sport and the arts. We should for instance be in the forefront to demand to know what happened to the monies from the FIFA World Cup, who benefitted, and which monies were allocated to development initiatives in our communities.

The ideological struggle and the battle of ideas

- 6.30 The primary challenge on this front is to build the capacity of SACP cadres to effectively wage an ideological struggle on all the key sites, terrains and fronts of struggle. Part of building SACP capacity on this front is that of enhancing the ability of our cadres to see through progressive sounding language and rhetoric from their neo-fascist or liberal intentions. The primary task of the 13th Congress Central Committee must be to focus on the ideological development of our cadres and to raise the necessary human and financial resources to achieve this. Our starting point must be to ensure that over the next 12 months every Party cadre must have gone through and have a basic understanding of our Programme, "The South African Road to Socialism".



- 6.31 SACP cadre development must go beyond political education on our programme and basics of Marxism-Leninism, and also incorporate policy development and capacity for our cadres, especially in the five priorities of our movement, as well as basic project management and administrative skills. The SACP must develop all-rounded cadres as a critical dimension of the battle of ideas.
- 6.32 It is the duty of the SACP, as custodians of progressive media to continue the critique of mainstream bourgeois media, which has now increasingly positioned itself as part of the opposition forces to our movement and government. It is also a media that is gradually gravitating towards a tabloidization and sensationalist approach to the many challenges facing our society. It is media characterized by juniorisation of its newsrooms, poor investment in capacity for investigative journalism, and increasing monopolization for profit maximization and buying of political influence rather than providing information.
- 6.33 The SACP as an organization must also move closer to community media as a critical platform for progressive messages in our communities and society. It is not enough to simply criticize mainstream media, important as this maybe, but the focus must be on consciously building alternative platforms of communicating that are also closer to the people. Part of this must be intensified contestation over the content and ideological orientation of the public broadcaster. Our Party districts and branches must also create their own platforms of communicating and local media facilities.
- 6.34 But we also have to make more effective use of our own internal media – *Umsebenzi*, *African Communist* and *Umsebenzi-OnLine*.
- 6.35 The task of the 13th Congress leadership must be to use the next five years to deepen and intensify socialist education and propaganda as well as an ongoing critique of capitalism. The next five years must be a period of intensified socialist propaganda amongst the masses. This will require the expansion of the size of the commissariat that will be in the forefront of socialist education both inside our own structures and beyond.
- 6.36 The SACP will also have to continue to engage and make a contribution in the broader ideological debates in our movement.

The Crisis of Capitalism and International Solidarity

- 6.37 Over the last five years the SACP has continued and deepened its internationalist work on a number of fronts. The most important development was our pioneering role in the establishment of the Africa Left Network Forum (ALNEF), which brings together a number of progressive socialist forces on the African Continent. Whilst this remains a small network, it is a very vital start in building a network of socialist progressive forces in our continent.
- 6.38 Another important development over the last five years was our hosting of the International Meeting of Communist and Workers Parties, which for the first time was addressed by a head of state, our President Jacob Zuma.
- 6.39 We have continued our solidarity work with the democratic struggles in Swaziland and solidarity with the people of Western Sahara, Cuba and Palestine. We have also taken our bilateral



relations with the Communist Party of China to higher levels, with ever increasing exchanges of visits by our cadres to the People's Republic of China. We require a more strategic approach to our relations with the CPC as part of SACP capacity for party building.

- 6.40 In the North of our own continent and large parts of the Middle East, we have seen popular uprisings by ordinary people, with the youth playing an especially significant role as it bears most of the brunt of the current global capitalist crisis. However what started as democratic expressions, largely because of the absence of an organized, progressive force representing these motive forces, now seems to be exploited by imperialism, through a combination of war and defense of its stooges, and is now being turned into a massive shift in the balance of forces in favour of imperialism. Syria is in the midst of what is essentially a civil war sponsored and abetted by imperialism, the Libyan regime has been forcibly removed, and there are real threats of isolating and attacking Iran.
- 6.41 In the Arab uprisings there is also a disturbing feature of the emergence of stronger forces of Islamic fundamentalism, the Middle East and globally. In the Arab Spring there is also an absence of manifestations of deepening solidarity with the cause of the Palestinian people.
- 6.42 The above is an illustration of the extent to which the more capitalism sinks into crisis the greedier it becomes and the greater the dangers of war.
- 6.43 In our international work, our Party has continued to share experiences of how fraternal parties, in their own national realities, are grappling with the many challenges and struggles to create a better life by millions of ordinary working people. Sharing of these experiences underlines the validity of the call made by our late General Secretary, Cde Chris Hani in the early 1990s, that we must build a strong, but flexible, agile and adaptable SACP able to effectively adjust and provide leadership under all conditions and circumstances. Therefore our Party must be structured such that it is capable of realizing its medium term objective of building working class hegemony in all key sites of power and influence.
- 6.44 Various communist parties have been facing different challenges at different points in time. Some have been ruling parties for decades now, yet others have been in and out of government, as ruling parties or as part of ruling coalitions. Some of the lessons out of all this is the importance of the presence of communists in all sites of power. Also the importance of presence amongst the masses and be able to provide leadership on all questions and issues facing the people. These have called for building adequate capacity for parties to adjust and adapt to any conditions, and not structure the communist parties only in relation to current challenges without factoring necessity to deal with different challenges at different points in time. We hope that with the presence of more than 40 representatives from our fraternal parties, we will use this Congress to further share and reflect on the experiences and challenges facing communist parties in the current period. This is even more important given the crises that capitalism is currently in.

7. A revolutionary approach to the five policy priorities of our movement: Socialism is the future, Build it now

- 7.1 One of the most important developments since our 12th Congress was the adoption of decent



work, education, health, the fight against crime and corruption, and land and agrarian reform, as the five priorities of the ANC and government at the Polokwane Conference. The SACP had also argued for the prioritization of especially health, education, work and land reform by the ANC and government. Agreement on these priorities went a long way in uniting the Alliance post-Polokwane around a very concrete programme of action.

7.2 What should be the programmatic perspectives that the SACP must adopt in driving the implementation towards the realization of the five priorities?

7.3 **Firstly**, there is no contradiction and instead a dialectical linkage between the 6 pillars of our MTV and the five policy priorities of our revolution. It is only from a perspective informed by the six pillars of our MTV that the working class can play a vanguard role in the achievement of the five policy priorities of our movement. The five policy priorities in turn, are the immediate terrains through which we can build working class hegemony and influence in society.

7.4 It is for these reasons that it is important for this Congress to reflect on progress made in the implementation of the five policy priorities of our revolution and some of the key tasks and challenges moving forward. **Secondly**, the SACP dare not act as spectators, outsiders or professional critics of government on the implementation of these priorities. Part of taking greater responsibility for the revolution is to use this Congress to undertake a review of progress and the challenges of implementation.

7.5 **Thirdly**, in evaluating progress it is also important to approach the policy priorities from a consistently class and socialist perspective. This means that our programmatic slogan, 'Socialism is the future, build it now' is of fundamental importance in driving these five priorities. Our programmatic slogan guides us in approaching all the principal tasks of the NDR through building elements of, and a momentum towards, socialism. After all, it is the workers and the poor who stand to benefit most from the most thorough implementation and achievement of the five priorities.

7.6 **Fourthly**, and working together with our Allies, the SACP must seek to build people's power and working class participation in driving these priorities. We must seek to eliminate the problematic concept and notion of 'delivery' from our activities and language, as this tends to create a passive population waiting for government to deliver. The key to the realization of the five key priorities is the mass mobilization of the people, thus underlining the importance of the people as their own liberators.

Decent work

7.7 The SACP remains convinced that decent work will ultimately only be brought about by the destruction of the capitalist system and the abolition of its relations of production premised on the extraction of surplus labour and surplus value from the working class. It is only the end to the exploitation of one human being by another that decent work and human dignity can become a reality in society. It is only when work is for the production of use values for use by humanity as a whole rather than work to produce commodities to be bought and sold for the capitalists that society can come to experience decent work. It is also only under these conditions that we can truly realize the fundamental principle of socialism – from each according to ability, to each according to need. Therefore the struggle for decent work must be premised on the intensification of the struggle for socialism.



- 7.8 However, the fact that our movement as a whole has placed decent work as one of the key five priorities of our revolution, calls for the mobilization of the working class, as the principal motive force of the revolution, to be at the forefront of this struggle. This struggle must however not be separated from the overall responsibility of the working class to play its role in the national democratic revolution. To narrowly focus on the struggle for decent work, outside of other responsibilities of the working class to create a caring society and a national democratic state, can only degenerate into the worst forms of workerism.
- 7.9 As highlighted in some detail in our draft programme, over the last five years the continuing unilateral, capitalist restructuring of the workplace has continued unabated and, unfortunately, without an adequate and sustained organizational response by the trade union movement. The transformation of permanent workers into casual workers, the increased use of labour brokers and the creation of multiple labour regimes within the same workplaces to maximize the exploitation of the working class have all continued at an even greater pace.
- 7.10 The SACP's position is that the struggle for decent work must incorporate a variety of dimensions and not simply be reduced to wages, important as this may be. The struggle for decent work must involve the campaign for a living wage, a decent social wage and transformed workplaces free of racism, patriarchy and managerial unilateralism. The struggle for decent work must also include intensification of the struggle against casualization, unilateral restructuring of the workplace and the labour brokers. These are struggles that must be taken up daily in the workplaces.

Access to, and success in, education

- 7.11 Education under socialism must be free and accessible to all. In addition, education must not only empower youth and adults with work related skills but must also empower them to understand the broader developmental challenges facing society, and remove from the curriculum and form of education capitalism and capitalist ideas. It will be an education system premised on advancing the goal of 'From each according to ability, to each according to need', thus completely eliminating the 'dog eat dog' capitalist mentality in the education system and its curricula.
- 7.12 At the centre of socialist education will be public institutions (universities, colleges and schools) that are funded and resourced from the public purse and the elimination of all types of private educational institutions. This will ensure that education is treated as a common public good, rather than a commodity to be bought and sold by those who have money and other resources.
- 7.13 The prioritization of education, together with free education for the poor, by the ANC and government provides a hugely important platform to radically transform the nature of education in our country. It is however important that the question of access to education must not be divorced from creating conditions for successful participation in the education system. Access and successful participation do not always go together. And indeed this is one of the critical challenges facing education in the national democratic revolution.
- 7.14 Successful participation in education means that conditions must be created for effective learning and teaching in our education institutions. There is no use in accessing educational institutions if there is no effective teaching and learning. Already the failure rate of first year students who receive government assistance at university is about 40%. Whilst government



must create the conditions for our students to perform successfully in the system, this is a societal and mobilisational effort that must involve students, communities, teachers and parents. Another critical dimension of success is curriculum transformation so that what is taught in our institutions is aligned to our overall developmental agenda. In short, access to education is a necessary but not sufficient condition for educational transformation. The SACP has a particularly important role to play in this regard.

- 7.15 An important and fundamental challenge in education is that of ensuring quality education and that our educational institutions are functional. Too many of the schools, colleges and universities that serve the workers and the poor are not offering quality education and a number of them are dysfunctional or functioning at less than optimal level. Whilst it is necessary for government to provide resources to address this primarily structural and historical situation, it is absolutely important that students, teachers and communities must play their role in this regard. This constitutes one of the biggest organizational challenges facing our Alliance in the educational front.
- 7.16 It is also very important that a strong message and mobilization be undertaken for students to study and work hard and to make education fashionable.
- 7.17 A related challenge on the educational front, but whose significance goes beyond just education, is that of the progressive organisation and mobilisation of the youth to access and succeed in education; what the YCL refers to as 'making education fashionable'. Education is a key platform and front for the organisation of the youth in our country. It is therefore very important for the SACP to put more energy in supporting the growth and strengthening of our YCL amongst the youth of our country. The capacity of the YCL to embark on socialist education and awareness amongst the youth must be significantly strengthened. The YCL must build its own independent organisational presence in our educational institutions, especially in institutions of higher education. As part of this responsibility the YCL must consciously and deliberately seek to act as a force for unifying the progressive youth alliance and not allow this front of progressive youth to be opportunistically sacrificed on the altar of tenderpreneurship and narrow factionalist politics in our movement. In so doing both the SACP and the YCL must be able to distinguish between a tenderpreneurial, neo-fascist and possibly counter-revolutionary element in the ANC YL, from the ANC YL as a whole. It is very important that we defend and strengthen a progressive ANCYL, deepen its relations with the YCL, as a progressive youth formation of our movement. We must not allow the counter-revolutionary 'Friends of the Youth League' to be confused for the ANCYL.

Health Care for All

- 7.18 Our commitment as the SACP is to access to health as a right for all and that it should be completely de-commodified with the complete abolition of private health-care under socialism.
- 7.19 Therefore our point of departure as the SACP is that health care is a fundamental human right that should be accessed by all. The most fundamental challenge we face in South Africa is the extent to which health care has been privatised and that more than 60% of the resources spent in health are spent for the private health care sector that is inaccessible to the overwhelming majority of our people.
- 7.20 An important development over the last five years has been the adoption of the establishment of a National Health Insurance as the policy of both the ANC and government. Recently



government has started with piloting the NHI in a few districts in the country. It is absolutely important that the SACP increases its capacity, from district level, to engage in this terrain in order to, amongst other things, ensure that the NHI is not hijacked by capitalist elements at the expense of access to health care for the majority of the workers and the poor.

- 7.21 The success of the NHI nevertheless hinges on the development of a particular consciousness especially amongst health workers about this as a revolutionary priority. It is therefore essential that the SACP engages especially with all the progressive health workers' unions to discuss the tasks and challenges of the NHI, and this should be amongst the first tasks of the 13th Congress Central Committee.
- 7.22 Nevertheless the struggle for an NHI must not have the unintended consequences of elevating curative over primary health care, including the absolutely necessary intensification of the campaign against HIV/AIDS, including unwanted and teenage pregnancy. Indeed, over the last five years there have been enormous policy breakthroughs and advances in the struggle against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. We have finally buried aids denialism, especially within the ranks of the liberation movement and, in the process, saved hundreds of thousands of lives. Never again should we allow denialism of any sort to take root in our movement! SACP cadres must be in the forefront in the struggle for primary health care, against lifestyle related diseases, in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, against smoking, and for healthy lifestyles.

The fight against crime and corruption

- 7.23 This is at the heart of the defence of the national democratic revolution. The SACP is proud that we were the first to launch this campaign as a mass campaign and took awareness of the urgency of this challenge to higher levels amongst our people. Ours was the first mass activity specifically directed at raising consciousness about the threat that corruption poses against our revolution, including the public exposure and articulation of the phenomenon of 'tenderpreneurs'.
- 7.24 The capitalist system, by its very nature, is a corrupt system. It is a system based on the exploitation of the majority by a minority and a system that perpetually seeks to increase its profits at any and at all cost.
- 7.25 It is absolutely essential that the criminal justice system be transformed and strengthened to be able to fight the scourge of crime and corruption more effectively. The role of NGOs in the fight against crime and corruption is also important. Nevertheless state institutions alone cannot be able to win the fight against crime and corruption without the mobilisation of the mass of the workers and the poor to be at the centre of this fight.
- 7.26 Similarly we must be careful that the fight against crime and corruption is not 'NGO-ised'. Much as NGOs have an important role to play, but often the intensity, strategies and prioritisation of the fight against corruption by the NGOs is often determined by their donors' preferences, rather than by the imperatives of the struggle against corruption in its totality. It is also not unusual for donors of NGOs to pursue, through the fight against corruption, other political agendas, often determined by the imperialist interests associated with donors. It is only a mobilised people who must be at the centre of this effort.



7.27 The SACP needs to play a leading role in keeping the struggle against crime and corruption as a mass struggle, with the people at the centre of this struggle. This Congress has a responsibility to decide on how we take this struggle to higher levels.

Land and Agrarian Transformation

7.28 Much as the Freedom Charter is not a socialist document, its call for the land to be shared amongst those who work it, and for the mineral resources beneath the soil to belong to the people as a whole, is clearly a socialist commitment, or at the very least a foundation for socialist relations on land and agrarian issues.

7.29 Over the past five years there have been a number of policy breakthroughs on land and agrarian reform. These include government's commitment to abandon the 'willing seller, willing buyer' principle as the basis for land and agrarian reform, as was confirmed by the ANC's Policy Conference. Other policy breakthroughs include commitment to limit and regulate foreign ownership of land

7.30 The key challenge is to ensure that these policy commitments become a reality. Whilst the SACP has over the past decade embarked on very significant campaigns on the land question, we have however not paid equal attention to the agrarian question and the necessity for a far-reaching agrarian revolution in our country in favour of the workers and the poor. This Congress will have to pay particular attention to this matter.

7.31 Land, land use, rural development and agrarian transformation all need to be handled in an integrated and systemic fashion. In so doing it also becomes clearer that the land question is not purely or even predominantly a rural issue, but is both urban and rural.

7.32 At this Congress we will have to discuss the question of agrarian transformation and lay the basis for building the capacity of the SACP to mobilise and campaign on this front. This matter is central to addressing poverty and hunger in our country, and agricultural development strategy is also a critical component of an industrial policy and our overall developmental objectives.

7.33 Over the last 4 decades there has been massive restructuring of agriculture globally and domestically, especially in the wake of the 1973 capitalist crisis as well as during the last five years of the current crisis. Amongst the key features of this restructuring has been the increasing casualisation of agricultural labour, including in South Africa and the increasing employment of labour from the SADC region. This has been accompanied by increasing mechanisation and therefore expulsion of millions of agricultural workers and their families from agricultural land. Part of the reduction of the production costs by agricultural capital has been to expel agricultural workers from both the houses and land of the owners, a phenomenon accompanied by increasing appearance of informal settlements in many parts of the white agricultural countryside.

7.34 As pointed out in our Draft Programme there is evidence of increased agricultural productivity in South Africa, especially in the mid 1990s into the early 2000s. Yet black and mainly African farmworkers have suffered greatly as highlighted above. Despite some BEE deals that have been concluded in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, this has hardly changed the semi-colonial growth trajectory in the agricultural sector.



- 7.35 The one example of an untransformed agriculture sub-sector despite some notable BEE deals is that of fisheries. This is a massive industry, dominated by big monopolies and in the process sidelining and literally starving small-scale fishers and many communities some of whom had been dependent on fishing for subsistence for centuries. For example, according to the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), along certain areas of the KwaZulu-Natal coast, inter-tidal resources have been harvested for the past 100 000 years; and that many small scale fishing communities have ancestral links with the indigenous communities.
- 7.36 In addition, DAFF captures the nature of the challenge in fishing as follows:
- “In the 1890’s South Africa introduced policy and legislation to establish a fisheries management system. However, this system was aimed mainly at the growing commercial fisheries sector and largely neglected the Small Scale fisheries sector. The commercial sector was dominated by wealthy white capital, which from the 1940s onwards was assisted by the range of measures that the Apartheid regime introduced to support the establishment. The dispossession of land, combined with the imposition of new systems of fisheries management, led to many communities losing some or all of their customary access to harvest resource of a flourishing export- orientated commercial fishing industry. During this period most of the coloured and black coastal communities living outside of the designated ‘Bantustans’ were deprived of the access that they had traditionally had to the sea and marine living resources; and prohibitions and regulations forced many into working for the white owned fishing companies and traditional fishing practices.”
- 7.37 A key challenge for instance for our coastal provinces and districts is to urgently take up the struggle for co-operative and small-scale fishing, and to ensure that our communities are not sacrificed on the altar of the interests of monopoly capital and a compradorial BEE. The SACP must take up this struggle, including inland fishing, also in order to strengthen the hand of government on this front.
- 7.38 The SACP also needs to take up the issue of land usage where there has been land restitution, with a particular focus on the productive agricultural use of this land. Our rural structures have a particularly important role to play in this regard.

8. The Alliance and the unity of the revolutionary forces

- 8.1 None of the immediate and medium term objectives of the national democratic revolution will be attained without strengthening our alliance at all levels and deepening the unity of the revolutionary forces as a whole.
- 8.2 Since our 12th Congress there has been great improvement in relations and functioning of the Alliance at the national level. There have been improved consultations amongst Alliance partners, openness to engage and exchange of information. Unfortunately other than during the election campaigns, and recently, our joint fight against the offensive Spear drawing, the Alliance has not been able to drive ongoing mass campaigns and mobilisation in line with our existing Alliance programme of action. This is the key challenge moving forward.
- 8.3 However it has also been clear to us that what we refer to as the New Tendency in our movement is against the continuing existence of our Alliance, with a particular hatred for



the SACP. Indeed we are not surprised by this, as the SACP is often seen as an obstacle to tenderpreneurship and other attempts to capture our movement for narrow interests of accumulation.

- 8.4 Indeed the functioning of the Alliance continues to be highly uneven at subnational levels. In a number of cases it is because of tensions between the ANC and SACP structures, arising out of fights for positions and power, as well as tenderpreneurship. Although most of the problems at these levels emanate from the ANC side, some of our own SACP structures are not entirely innocent themselves. This has been the case for a very long period and this is a matter that needs to be given added priority. The key task in front of the Alliance is that of ongoing mass work on the ground, especially from ward-level, through the implementation of the 'Know Your Neighbourhood Campaign'. There is no other way to improve relations with the ANC other than insisting on the implementation of the Alliance programme of action.
- 8.5 The SACP is indeed satisfied with the current leadership of the ANC and the manner in which it has sought to foster and deepen the unity of the Alliance. So do we also note with satisfaction some important progress made by government under the leadership of President Zuma. We can only wish that this relationship and commitment to the Alliance and its improved working relationship continues and is further deepened, especially so during this next 6 months of the Congresses of our three allied formations.
- 8.6 Our relationship with COSATU, overall has continued to be good, and has taken place at a number of levels. We continued to have very good relations with a number of COSATU affiliates, especially around joint cadre development initiatives as well as support for each other's campaigns. A number of COSATU affiliates have also contributed in many ways materially to the campaigns and activities of the SACP.
- 8.7 The only issue that created serious tensions between COSATU and the SACP was that relating to the manner in which the deployment of SACP cadres was raised in the public domain without raising this matter with the SACP first. Nevertheless after bilateral discussions we managed to resolve this matter in a manner that has contributed to the further strengthening of our relations. Unfortunately the NUMSA leadership seems to have continued to raise this matter in a manner that seems to be directed at discrediting the SACP, its leadership and its decisions, and seems to be aimed at negatively harming the image and integrity of the SACP rather than improving relations amongst ourselves. We have told NUMSA in a very forthright manner that it is not the custodian of the decisions of the SACP, nor should it seek to act as such in future. As the SACP however, and as the vanguard Party of the working class, we must not allow ourselves to be irritated and diverted by some of this behaviour, but instead we need to be focused on strengthening relations with COSATU and all its affiliates. We all know that enemies of the working class will always attempt to drive a wedge between communists and the labour movement. We must protect this relationship with all we have.
- 8.8 However it is important that we must properly identify any threats to COSATU in particular during this period moving forward. As highlighted earlier, the continuing massive capitalist restructuring of the workplace constitutes a serious threat to the power and organisational capacity of organised workers in general and COSATU in particular. Secondly, the phenomenon of business unionism – using one's position in the labour movement to advance private and personal accumulation interests – poses a very serious threat to the unity, militancy and revolutionary character of COSATU. It is a phenomenon we must fight in the same way as



we fight corruption and tenderpreneurship, as it is no different from this. Thirdly, there is a small, but lingering, phenomenon in the trade union movement that of wanting to deliberately cause strain and divide the labour movement from the SACP and the ANC. We must intensify ideological work to expose and defeat this phenomenon within the ranks of COSATU and the progressive trade union movement.

- 8.9 Part of strengthening the relationship between the SACP and COSATU (and its affiliates) is to continue with joint programmes of action and joint political schools, including clarifying the differences and complementarity between our two formations so that our relations are deepened.
- 8.10 The SACP, together with the ANC and COSATU, have for a while now not succeeded in properly defining our relationship with SANCO. The SACP regards the building of progressive civic and residents associations as a critical front of struggle in consolidating and deepening the NDR. It is for this reason that SANCO remains an important progressive organisation that needs to be strengthened. However a matter that has been put before our alliance for discussion is whether SANCO should be part of the alliance in the same way as the three other partners, or it should be built as part of the broader progressive forces in the national democratic revolution. Let this Congress discuss this matter frankly and openly in the interests of building the progressive civic movement in our country.
- 8.11 The unity of our alliance must not be based on friendship or who occupies which positions at a particular point in time. It is an alliance that must be based on the supreme principle of selfless service to the people and ruthless struggle against corruption, which is tantamount to theft from the people.

9. Building the Capacity of the SACP as a Vanguard Party

- 9.1 Perhaps the most critical challenge of this Congress is to emerge with a clear plan on strengthening the capacity of the SACP as a vanguard party of the working class. It is for this reason that our Draft Programme has devoted a whole chapter to this particular challenge.
- 9.2 Since 2007 our membership has grown and the stature and influence of the SACP over this period has also increased. Whilst our class enemies and detractors have continued to belittle us, they know that the reasons for attempting to do as such is because they are deeply worried about the continuing growth and influence of the SACP. Precisely as an attempt to try and isolate and therefore weaken us, they continually goad us to stand on our own, to move out of the Alliance and go our own way. It is as if being part of the Alliance is not going our own way. They goad us in this direction precisely because they are scared of our influence and as one of those few parties that have continued to grow despite the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- 9.3 In discussing the challenge of strengthening the SACP it is also imperative that we understand the current challenges and those that lie ahead so that our Party is up to the challenge. This means that we must refuse to approach party building from the standpoint of only what we have done in the past. Yes, we have truly been an indispensable component of the liberation movement in the past. We must build on this, but we also cannot imprison the task of party building in the past and ignore the current and future challenges. We need to expose all back-handed compliments to the SACP whose intention is to kill us softly. For instance we must

reject this practice of praising the dead in order to condemn the living: “This is no longer the party of Moses Kotane”.

- 9.4 Yes, the SACP has played a critical role in the political education of the cadres of the broader liberation movement over the past nine decades. We continue to do this work today. But this should not therefore seek to relegate the SACP and its relevance only to being a political school, no matter how important this may be. To restrict us to this would be the vulgarisation of the role of the SACP in the liberation movement. The Party has over the decades of its existence also built the trade union movement in our country, the Party has built co-operatives, the women’s movement, progressive media, and played an important role in the armed struggle and the self-defence units of the late 1980s into the 1990s. Yes, we have been a political school and more. After 1994 we have also led important mass campaigns in our own right, including the highly influential financial sector campaign as well as a number of other campaigns that have made an important contribution to the policy perspectives and programmes of our movement and government. Taking responsibility for the revolution means being in all these fronts.
- 9.5 It is for these reasons that the task we have set for ourselves for discussion on party building at this Congress must also focus on the various fronts of struggle in which communists need to play an influential, if not a leading, role. It is therefore important that we continue to be guided by the Leninist principle of party building and revolutionary struggle: ‘Theory without practice is sterile, and practice without theory is blind’.
- 9.6 Party building must also be informed by the absolute necessity to build independent Party presence and influence in the various fronts of struggle and society as a whole. Between 1950 and 1990, the work of our party was heavily influenced by the conditions of illegality. This was, after all, one of the major issues we debated in our first Congress after our unbanning in 1991. It was after these debates that we decided to grow the size of the Party, and decided on a “mass vanguard” approach and later adopted our programmatic slogan ‘socialism is the future, build it now’. This was informed by the fact that we were now operating legally and also were part of an alliance that was in governance after 1994. We do indeed need to focus on turning quantity into quality and this discussion must be given the attention it deserves.
- 9.7 So what are some of the critical consideration we must bear in mind about immediate and future challenges, and what type of a Communist Party would this require?
- 9.8 As Marxists we believe that history evolves through class struggle, and, it is mainly organised classes that make history. We believe in working class leadership of the state and society. So as the SACP we more than any other organisation need to be led by a collective leadership.
- 9.9 Of course, individuals are important in history, but they cannot be understood outside of historical and structural contexts, or the struggles of class and other social forces. We need to open up a major debate on what type of leadership the SACP needs at all levels and how this leadership should function.
- 9.10 The focus here will be mainly on the national leadership, but many of the issues raised would to some or other degree also apply to leadership at provincial and other levels of the SACP. Let us use this Congress to frankly reflect on the state of the leadership of the SACP over the last five years.



- 9.11 This question has become more important because of the significant growth in our membership; the increasingly important role the SACP plays in the country and internationally; the increase in the range and scope of the SACP's activities in recent years; the complexities of the current political terrain; new challenges within the Tripartite Alliance; and the deployment of senior SACP leaders in government.
- 9.12 As with many organisations, the burden of leadership in the SACP is disproportionately borne by too few leaders in our executive structures. There are too many passive members of our executive structures. Some do little more than attend meetings. Sub-committees in which they serve are not functional. A minority on these executive structures is available for deployment. Yet we are party of activism!
- 9.13 We cannot allow this to continue. So if this Congress, comrades, is about many things, it's also about electing an activist, dynamic collective leadership suitable to the major tasks that confront the Party! It's about electing an activist leadership for an activist vanguard party! A Communist Party!
- 9.14 At the national level, comrades, too much responsibility has been put on the shoulders of the too few comrades, especially the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary! Of course, there are other PB and CC comrades who do more than their fair share, but ultimately the Secretariat bears an undue responsibility! Our detractors will say the problem is that the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary are in government. But that view is simplistic. Even if we were not in government, the issues would arise because of the broader political context we are in and the importance in general for a Communist Party to function with a collective leadership consistent with socialist values.
- 9.15 The SACP has become over-identified with the General Secretary. So has the Party been often overly identified with provincial secretaries in the provinces. Surely this is not good for the Party. We need other leaders to be more publicly identified with the Party, and be accepted by our members and various other constituencies as leaders carrying the full authority of the highest levels of leadership of the Party. The proposal to this Congress to elect two or three Deputy General Secretaries who will together with the General Secretary constitute a Secretariat is a step in the right direction.
- 9.16 We need more discussion within our structures on how to foster a more collective leadership. There are short, medium and long term aspects that we need to consider. Apart from what has just been said, we need to also consider other proposals on how to develop a more collective leadership over time:
- a. Better and more intensive political education that provides both political depth and develops the leadership potential of key comrades. This would include PB and CC members.
 - b. To elect to the CC comrades with a more activist orientation and decide on PB portfolios with this as a major consideration.
 - c. We also need more PB and CC members to write for our own publications and also engage in the public media. We need to develop a significant training programme to advance this. How can a Communist Party survive, let alone advance, if not enough of its leaders do not write?
 - d. It is important to have major trade union, government and other leaders in the PB, but they



should also be required to give a certain percentage of their time to doing SACP work.

- e. On any single day there should, through a rotation system, be at least 2 PB/CC members, other than those who are full-time, to do SACP work.
- f. We need a far more active Deployment and Accountability Committee made up of senior Politburo members, and perhaps chaired by a Deputy General Secretary.

9.17 There are two primary challenges of our revolution over the next five years. The first one is that of translating the many important policy breakthroughs made over the past five year into palpable changes and transformation of our semi-colonial economic growth path for the progressive benefit of the overwhelming majority of the workers and the poor.

9.18 The second critical challenge is that of defeating an internal, but externally backed, attempt in our movement to try and capture it for purposes of narrow private accumulation by a small elite, possibly backed by imperialist interests. This is going to require massive mobilisation of the working class and our people as a whole in defence of our movement and revolution. This requires people-driven and people-centred development, and not tender driven projects! We cannot, and dare not allow our revolution to be stolen! Therefore the SACP dare not only focus on the past, but crucially on the present and the future challenges.

9.19 Taking responsibility of our revolution in the immediate also means positive and active participation and contribution in the lead up to, and at, the forthcoming COSATU Congress and the ANC's Mangaung Conference. Let us use the unity of the Party to contribute towards the unity of our allies!

Thank you



Socialism and the struggle for environmental justice

1. The struggle for socialism and the struggle for environmental justice are ultimately one and the same struggle. The struggle against a system based on private accumulation and exploitation is inextricably linked to the struggle to ensure that humanity develops a harmonious, sustainable relationship with nature.
2. In an earlier Industrial Revolution phase of capitalist development in Europe, Marx pioneered an understanding of this fundamental truth. This understanding was rooted in an historical materialist approach to society – namely that human beings themselves are in the first instance physical and biological beings. The societies that we build and which in turn shape us into humans with their cultures, ideas, technologies and modes of production have a material, which is to say, a bio-physical foundation. If the relationship between humans and their environment, between a society and its bio-physical foundations is severely disrupted or rendered unsustainable, then human civilization itself will perish.
3. Marx referred to this essential relationship between society and nature as a “metabolic” relationship. Drawing on the scientific research of his day, Marx noted, for instance, that the capitalist agrarian revolution, which had led to the expropriation of peasant farmers and the extensive and intensive exploitation of land, had resulted initially in significantly increased levels of productivity. However, this intensive, mechanized exploitation of the land was also resulting in the increasing and perhaps irreversible depletion of the fertility of the soil and so, ironically, to declining productivity. This is what Marx referred to as a “metabolic rift” – a widening breakdown in the relationship between society and nature.
4. Engels in his empirical studies on the squalid, unhealthy and polluted housing of the industrial working class in Manchester (“The condition of the working class in England” 1844) noted how immense technical progress in the development of the forces of production (which he and Marx supported) could, under exploitative capitalist relations of production, also result in a massive regression in the social and environmental conditions of the direct producers – in this case a new proletariat.
5. With some notable exceptions, generally through much of the 20th century, these early Marxist ecological insights were not strongly developed within the mainstream socialist and communist traditions or within societies beginning to build socialism. Perhaps a major reason for this is that the first socialist breakthroughs occurred in countries like Russia and China at a time when they were at a very backward stage of technical advancement. The emphasis tended to be on an accelerated process of rapid industrialization, often with little concern for the environmental or social impact. Faced with continuous imperialist destabilization offensives, these socialist societies often focused, in too one-sided way, on “catching up” with the technologies and output of the developed capitalist countries.
6. As a result of the relative neglect of the environmental struggle amongst the socialist left, the space was often taken up by a variety of conservative and even reactionary forces. Western “conservationists” tended to see local communities (who had been living in relative harmony with their natural surroundings for centuries as hunter-gatherers, or artisanal fishers, or small-scale farmers) as the source of the problem threatening the survival of animal species and local plants. This Western “conservationism” conveniently turned reality upside-down – it was colonial and imperialist dispossession and the rabid exploitation of natural resources that had carried out genocidal attacks on indigenous communities and whole-sale extermination of wild-

life. The human and animal survivors were often forced into over-crowded “reserves” (labour reserves in the former case, “nature” reserves in the latter case). Indigenous communities were then cast as “poachers” and “squatters”, while the real dispossessors and exterminators were portrayed as “civilizing conservationists”. In other cases, middle-class suburbanites have taken up “environmental” struggles to protect their own property values and to preserve the green-belts that insulate them from the squalid conditions in which working class communities live. Even more reactionary voices (still to be heard among some in South Africa) argue that environmental degradation, the depletion of non-renewable resources, and climate change are essentially the result of “over-population” (usually meaning there are “too many third world people”).

7. These reactionary appropriations of the struggle for environmental “justice” have sometimes led to a counter, knee-jerk reaction from progressive forces – dismissing the “green” struggle as essentially a conservative, middle-class affair. However, over the last few decades there has been a renewed and flourishing development of socialist ecological theory and active campaigning. Socialist Cuba has often been in the forefront in this regard. From the 1990s, faced with economic hardship following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the overnight loss of cheap oil, and petroleum-based pesticides and fertilizers, socialist Cuba pioneered a host of ecologically sustainable approaches to agriculture and food and energy security. These included smaller farms, the shortening of logistics hauls through greater local marketing, mixed cropping and a move away from large sugar plantations, the use of labour-intensive methods, and even the reversion in many cases to the use of more soil friendly oxen as opposed to heavy tractors for ploughing. Fidel Castro has become one of the most consistent global leaders raising the challenges of ecological sustainability from a socialist, anti-capitalist perspective.
8. Here in South Africa worker and community struggles in the late-1970s and through the 1980s increasingly took up environmental issues – often under the banner of health and safety campaigns. These campaigns high-lighted the manner in which the profit-maximising conduct of capitalist mining, agricultural and industrial companies often seriously compromised the health of workers and of neighbouring working class communities. In this way the connection between environmental struggles and the national democratic and class struggles was affirmed in practice.
9. Over the last decades a growing body of scientific evidence has shown that globally we are now on a dangerous trajectory which, unless it is reversed and transformed, will eventually threaten the bio-physical preconditions for any human survival. Green-house gas emissions (particularly CO₂) are leading to global warming which is already beginning to produce anomalous and sometimes catastrophic weather events. All parts of the world will increasingly be affected by climate change, but it is poor regions, countries, and communities with fewer resources to adapt that will be most affected. Green-house gas emissions are particularly associated with coal-fired power stations and oil-based transport, but there are also many other sources.
10. Climate change is not the only dimension to the looming ecological disaster. According to scientists linked to the Stockholm Resilience Centre, we have crossed or are near to crossing several other “planetary boundaries”. Apart from climate change there is also species extinction, disruption of the nitrogen-phosphorous cycle, ocean acidification, ozone depletion, freshwater usage and land cover change. These are all irreversible changes to the planet on which human civilization has been built, taking us into a dangerous and largely uncharted new reality.



11. While human societies have always impacted on the natural environment, the scale of accelerated destruction in our era of globalized profit-driven capitalism is absolutely unprecedented. As noted in our “SA Road To Socialism 2012” document, capitalism as a mode of production is unique in its systemic requirement to constantly grow and expand or face crisis. Capitalism is incapable of existing in a stable-state economy that replenishes what it consumes. Constant voracious expansion is the inherent requirement for profit-maximising capitalism – hence the obsession of its ideologues with growth, growth, growth.
12. Having been in denial about climate change and other related dangers for many years, the political leadership in the advanced capitalist countries and their ideologues are increasingly (if unevenly) accepting what the international scientific consensus is telling them. However capitalism and its apologists are incapable of addressing the roots of the problem. They constantly hold out the utopian hope of some or other technological solution to climate change for instance. However, the intellectual property associated with these “green technologies” is typically held by for-profit capitalist monopolies, and instead of being rolled out for the good of humanity, these technologies are commodified and priced beyond the means of most developing countries. Capitalism also offers other pseudo answers, market-solutions with such schemes as “carbon trading” where rich capitalist countries pay poor third world farmers, for instance, to preserve their forests so that their own capitalist industries back home can continue to pollute.
13. While various “green technologies” are potentially an important part of the solution, unless there is a radical change in the capitalist relations of production the possibilities of a systematic and coherent global approach will be constantly undermined. More than ever, socialists have a global responsibility for the future of humankind. To address the ecological disaster facing us we have to change society itself. We have to move away from societies directed at profits and accumulation towards sustainable steady-state economies. We have to reduce or eliminate wasteful consumption and re-direct society from commodity production and consumption to sustainable and more egalitarian human development. This will also require democratic social and environmental planning – in short a radical shift towards socialism.
14. While the struggle for socialism and the inter-related struggle for ecological sustainability are ultimately internationalist struggles, we have local, national and regional responsibilities. In SA, our apartheid colonial past and its continuing systemic legacy in the present has placed our country onto a highly problematic trajectory from an ecologically sustainable perspective. The historical predominance of mining in a relatively dry hinterland has set up numerous challenges. An industry based on the extraction of non-renewable resources has left us with poisonous mine dumps, depleted (and now often ownerless) mines leaking acid mine drainage. Deep-level capital-intensive mining combined with formerly abundant “cheap” (if we exclude so-called “externalities”) coal has meant that our growth path has been extremely energy-intensive. Although Africa as a whole is estimated to contribute only 2% of global green-house gas (GHG) emissions – South Africa is responsible for 50% of all of Africa’s emissions. In per capita terms, SA is among the highest GHG emitters in the world.
15. Group areas removals, and poorly planned and under-resourced mass urbanization have located the working class and poor in distant and often environmentally problematic areas (prone to flooding, for instance). Poor housing and poor water, sanitation and energy infrastructure (along with the failure to maintain this infrastructure when it exists) contribute not only to poor health and well-being outcomes for those living in townships and informal settlements, but also lead to the further destruction and pollution of the environment, through, for instance, the untreated run-offs of sewerage into critical water courses. Apartheid geography

and its legacy combined with poor and inefficient public transport result not only in long and costly commuting for working class communities – but also contribute to our excessive GHG emissions. Overcrowding in former reserves has produced serious environmental degradation and deepened poverty in these areas in which some thirty percent of South Africans still live. Poor urban and land-use planning and skewed priorities have left the door open to property speculators, dysfunctional urban sprawl, and a host of environmentally destructive developments – from over-investment in freeways, to water-guzzling, non-productive golf-estates, to luxurious resorts in ecologically sensitive locations. Capital-intensive commercial farming has led to increased use of mono-cropping, and harmful pesticides and fertilizers which also run-off into key water courses. Profit-maximising corporate fishing operations and our inability to effectively police and protect our maritime waters and their resources from international fishing fleets have seen our fish stocks plummet. Many of our once common species are now on the red data list, and in the case of some species they have possibly passed the point of non-recovery.

16. This is a brief overview of some of the most serious symptoms of an increasingly unsustainable “metabolic rift” in SA (a rift between the present socio-economic trajectory and nature itself). This brief overview also serves to point towards some of the key programmatic, policy and campaigning strategies that the SACP, together with all democratic and progressive forces, need to take up. These include:
 - a. Ensuring that we greatly enhance our ability to plan for the medium- and longer-terms (and to implement what we plan), and that environmental sustainability is fully integrated into all of our planning, policies and implementation programmes – including major programmatic initiatives like the New Growth Path, the Industrial Policy Action Programmes and the Presidentially-led Infrastructure build programme .
 - b. Significantly expanding the capacity of our developmental state to regulate, police and enforce developmental environmental standards and responsibilities – in short to roll back the “free-hand” of the market. Special attention in this respect needs to be paid to key sectors like mining, energy, transport, construction, agriculture and fisheries. There is also an important role to play in mobilizing communities – fishing communities, for instance – to play an active role in supporting state initiatives to protect local resources.
 - c. Ensuring as rapid as possible a switch to the use of renewable sources (notably solar and wind) for energy, while balancing this with other developmental priorities.
 - d. An aggressive land reform programme with an emphasis on sustainable and productive households and communities. A greater emphasis on small-scale family and cooperative farming is not only critical for greater job-creation, but is also in principle environmentally better with a much lower carbon footprint. Sustainable small-scale farming, given adequate infrastructural support, can also revive local markets thereby eliminating the excessive carbon footprint of mass-produced food grown on large-scale commercial farms with their extensive storage, transport and corporate retail networks.
 - e. Better planned and better located human settlement patterns, the prioritization of public transport over private cars, and a switch from road to rail for freight transport are all critical social objectives but they are also integral to lowering the Green House Gas emissions in our transport systems.



- f. Accelerating and resourcing bold pre-emptive response measures to climate change and other environmentally linked crises – preparing vulnerable communities, regions and coastlines before climate-change impacts
 - g. The success of these environmental plans, policies and interventions, depends on popular and working class mobilization. Already through programmes like the Community Works Programme, the Expanded Public Works Programme and a range of community based initiatives, popular energies are being mobilized to address, among other things, environmental challenges as an integral part of local development. We need to massify many of these current programmes. There is also much greater scope for national popular mobilization and campaigning around energy conservation, for instance.
17. Finally, all of these initiatives need to be integrated into the wider struggle to abolish a social system based on the exploitation of working people and the voracious plundering of nature. The SACP has an important responsibility to connect dynamically with a wide range of progressive environmental initiatives, while always drawing the connections between environmental struggles and a wider social transformation.