



Bua Komanisi!

Volume 11, Issue No. 1 - July 2018

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

Towards a reconfigured Alliance!

THE SECOND RADICAL PHASE
OF THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION





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Towards a reconfigured Alliance

Preface and introduction

- 1) The purpose of this draft discussion document is to give practical effect to the July 2017 SACP 14th Congress resolution on the Party and state and popular power. With the Political Report of the Fourth Plenary Session of the 14th Congress Central Committee (CC) held from 1-3 June 2018, subtitled 'Unite the working class as the core of building a left popular front', developing a focus on programmatic measures to give practical effect to the objective of forging a popular left front, the focal point of this paper is therefore specifically on a reconfigured Alliance. It is envisaged that, as usual, the Political Report or its focus on a progressive popular left front will also be published.
- 2) The articulation of the road map for the implementation of the new SACP and state and popular power strategy, as provided for in the resolution itself, started at the First Augmented Plenary Session of the Party 14th Congress CC held 1-3 December 2017. This was the Second Plenary Session of the SACP 14th Congress CC. As part of the road map process, the Third Plenary Session of the Party 14th Congress CC held from 23-24 February 2018 and the Party Building Commission that convened thereafter also discussed the questions of a reconfigured Alliance and a popular left front. The various recommendations that were made have been included or taken account of in this paper, including by way of engagement where this was found necessary. The document now includes contributions that were made at the Fourth Plenary Session of the 14th Congress CC. Therefore a number of the perspectives covered or presented in this document are not necessarily new.
- 3) By way of a brief recap, the SACP 14th Congress resolved that the Party must actively contest state power through elections. The resolution recognises that the SACP has actively contested elections – i.e. within the umbrella of an ANC-led electoral platform of the Alliance since the first democratic general election held in 1994.
- 4) The difference the resolution introduced is that, going forward the Party's electoral strategy 'may, or may not be', within the umbrella of a reconfigured Alliance. The 'may not be' shift which distinguishes the Party 14th Congress resolution from all previous resolutions on this matter was adopted for the first time since 1994. However, this was not the so-called 'going it alone' shift. As per our Party's 14th Congress, without a reconfigured Alliance there would be no other alternative but to eventually contest state power by contesting elections through a popular left front outside of the umbrella of the Alliance in its untransformed form.
- 5) The resolution expressly provides for two options. In no particular order, the first is that of a reconfigured Alliance to which this paper seeks to contribute. The other, to avoid placing all expectations and hopes in the single outcome of a reconfigured Alliance, and therefore if the Alliance is eventually not reconfigured, is that of a process to forge a popular left front. Looked at not mechanically but dialectically, a progressive left popular front does NOT necessarily exclude the reconfiguration of the Alliance. This must be taken to heart within the Alliance, and is particularly important if the ANC is to act, in practice as in the text of its Strategy and Tactics document, as 'a disciplined force of the left'.
- 6) Similarly, a progressive left popular front that epitomises the unity of a wider array of worker and progressive left forces and a reconfigured Alliance are not necessarily mutually exclusive – i.e. looked at dialectically rather than mechanically. To this end the purpose for which the SACP 14th Congress resolved that the Party must develop a leading role towards forging a popular left front is instructive. This progressive left popular front, according to the resolution, must advance, deepen and defend the second radical phase of the national democratic

revolution (NDR) – the most direct and shortest road to socialism in our country’s historical conditions. This is the mandate, the premise from which the SACP still has to approach the forging of a left popular front electoral platform outside of the Alliance in its current form – i.e., as indicated above, if the Alliance is eventually not reconfigured.

- 7) In addition, whether severally or jointly, both a reconfigured Alliance and a progressive left popular front require a decisively unifying political programme to cement organisational ties with the broad masses of the working class and progressive strata, in urban and in rural areas alike. This inviolable bond with the masses and progressive strata must be tempered in class struggle, in the real theatre of economic, political and broader social changes. In this regard it is important to underline the fact that as an integral and inseparable part of the resolution on the SACP and state and popular power, the 14th Party Congress *explicitly* discouraged throwing the vanguard in a decisive battle alone, before the working class, the broad masses, are ready.
- 8) However, it is important to emphasise the fact that the resolution for the pursuit of both a reconfigured Alliance and a progressive left popular front was underpinned by the conclusion, ruling out the perpetuation of the status quo, reached by the SACP before the Congress. The

Party made it very clear that the modus operandi of the Alliance in its current form is outdated and will, going forward, not likely be able to hold Alliance components and the class motive forces of the NDR together. Looked at dialectically, both the two options converge on the same practical effect – i.e., in one way or the other, a reconfigured Alliance.

- 9) In many ways therefore the forging of a progressive left popular front is neither a bargaining item nor a bargaining chip. It is a structural insurance required to secure working class interests, and must not be looked at in isolation from the necessity for a reconfigured Alliance. In the ultimate analysis, a progressive left popular front is itself a particular expression of an alliance – i.e. of left forces converging on the necessity to advance, deepen and defend a second radical phase of the NDR – the most direct and shortest road to socialism in our country’s historical conditions. A left popular front is as such covered by the exposition of the theoretical basis of the formation of alliances by Communists as taken forward starting in the next section.
- 10) It is important to underline that the SACP 14th Congress resolution on the Party and state and popular power calls for other political tasks. These include a scientific audit of Party organisation at all levels and its influence in key



sites of struggle and significant centres of power, including the community. The tasks are being taken forward in their respective organisational processes.

- 11) At the centre of this process is the question of the organisational independence of the Party, both in relation to capacity to fulfil its historical mission and engage in alliances. The Party needs to safeguard and deepen its independence and capacity in relation at least to these two areas of its political programme. Party independence, but which is rooted in the ranks of the working class and therefore which is not something outside of the working class, is organisationally an important condition for entering into alliances with other organisations. Without its independence intact and robust, the Party can find itself at least subordinated or in the extreme suffocated, if not eventually liquidated in alliances with other formations.
- 12) Last but not least, our work and engagements on a reconfigured Alliance and a progressive left popular front, including engagements with our allies and other worker and progressive organisations, must culminate in the convening of a Special National Congress at an appropriate time. According to the Party 14th Congress resolution on the SACP and state and popular power, it is the Special National Congress that must ultimately adopt the way forward after receiving and considering the road map implementation report.

Structure of the document

- 13) This paper is structured in a way that recognises the significant membership growth that the SACP has achieved since unbanning, and more so in the last decade. This requires the Party, including in a discussion document, to make a provision for political education in every process it handles. The length of this discussion document was therefore necessitated by the importance of facilitating that objective as well. The paper starts from, as its premise, the classical foundations and theoretical basis of the formation of strategic and tactical alliances by Communists.
- 14) The presentation leads to a reflection on the formation and development of our Alliance. This is organised into interrelated sections,

as will be seen. While most of the content is more relevant to the SACP internally, towards the end the paper grapples with the nature and character of a reconfigured Alliance – which is relevant to the Alliance as a whole. At the end of the process of this discussion, the SACP will sift the proposals put forward in this paper and those it will receive as further inputs. The CC will use the final proposals to produce a concise yet comprehensive contribution to the Alliance document and engagements on a reconfigured Alliance. This process was agreed to at the Alliance Political Council in October 2017 as a result, at least on our part as the SACP, of engaging with our allies as required by the provisions of our 14th Congress resolution on the Party and state and popular power.

Classical foundations and theoretical basis of Communist strategic and tactical alliances

- 15) The historical origins of the formation of alliances by the Communist Party are to be found in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* by Karl Marx and Frederic Engels. However, as Marx and Engels later had to say in their 1872 preface to the *Manifesto*, although the general principles laid down in the *Manifesto* in 1848 remained as relevant as ever, much of the state of things had changed 24-25 years later. The process of history had, for example, swept off from the earth the greater portion of the political parties, enumerated in the fourth section of the *Manifesto*, with which Communists established strategic or tactical relations in different countries. Nevertheless, the following principles from the *Manifesto* are of theoretical importance. They therefore merit underlining with regard not only to the ever relevant considerations on strategic and tactical relations but also the tasks of the Communist Party in relation to the working class.
 - 15.1) The starting point is that Communists do not form a separate party outside of and opposed to the movement of the proletariat as a whole. 'They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole', and 'do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement'. 'In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries... Communists point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently

of all nationality'; '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'. These principles distinguish the Communist Party from other parties.

- 15.2) Further, Communists must develop their capacity and that of Party organisation to become and practically act as the most advanced and resolute section of the movement of the working class. Communists must therefore epitomise a detachment that pushes forward all others. They have, theoretically, over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.
- 16) The above principles from the second section of the *Manifesto* are taken forward in its fourth section from a review of strategic and tactical alliances that were formed by Communists in different countries:
- 16.1) Firstly, '...Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement' (i.e. socialism, itself a transition to the ultimate goal of communism). It is on this principle that Communists base their considerations of strategic and tactical alliances. The ideological roots of our articulation of the interrelationship between the NDR and socialism can also be traced to this principle.
- 16.2) Secondly, in every alliance that they form, or enter into, Communists reserve the right to take and express critical positions, and to exercise this right as and when it becomes necessary. Therefore being in an alliance does NOT and must NOT translate into being subordinated or liquidated into that alliance. No alliance must lead to the Party concealing its views and abandoning its aims, its historical mission, its programme and campaigns. This must however take into account the strategic and tactical options available in class struggle. According to the *Manifesto*, class struggle is a constant and uninterrupted process but it is not always open. It is at times hidden.

- 16.3) Thirdly, Communists do not lose sight of antagonistic elements that are to be found inside the organisations they form alliances with. Such elements can cause many problems. They can for example drive out Communists and break such alliances for their own profit or to the advantage of the strategic adversaries of the working class as a whole.
- 16.4) Fourthly, the Communists can, as the *Manifesto* itself further states, if necessary enter into alliances and therefore 'fight with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way' against the existing order of things or against conservative forces. 'But they never cease, for a single instant, to instil into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, in order that the... workers may straightway use, as so many weapons against the bourgeoisie, the social and political conditions that the bourgeoisie must necessarily introduce along with its supremacy, and in order that, after the fall of the reactionary classes..., the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin'. (Emphasis added).
- 16.5) Fifthly, in short as the *Manifesto* says, 'Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things' – of which must be changed as an act of social progress or a revolution. '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'. (Emphasis added)
- 16.6) Last but not least, Communists labour everywhere, and at all times, for the unity of democratic forces. In this regard, the unity of the working class is fundamentally important.
- 17) A number of the above principles are articulated in our political theory as the SACP. This includes our 14th Congress resolution on the SACP and state and popular power, and our Political Programme, *the South African Road to Socialism*. For example the insertion of 'and popular' in the initial 'SACP and state power' debate to read as the Party 14th Congress resolution does now – i.e. the 'SACP and state and popular power' – was itself an articulation of the above principles. The resolution further draws from Lenin and

correctly reaffirms the nature and character of the SACP as a working class party thus: "... that a 'Victory cannot be won with a vanguard alone' is relevant to our own reality, and that throwing 'the vanguard into the decisive battle' before the 'entire class, the broad masses' are ready would be a grave mistake".

- 18) In the same vein, the South African Road to Socialism concludes that 'Our strategic objective in regard to state power is to secure not party political but working class hegemony over the state'. The Party's ideological outlook is therefore rooted in the interests of the working class. *Every step the Party takes must be with and for the working class.* This includes considerations on forming and handling strategic and tactical alliances. The attitude of the Communist Party to this question, as the *Manifesto* itself states with regard to its generally valid principles, must at all times take into account existing historical conditions. Among others this requires a thorough assessment of the configuration and line-up of political formations and their underpinning balance of class forces. The examination must include an analysis of the international dimensions of the national balance of forces, including the nature, character and impact of the intercourse between the two, as well as, in the final analysis, on the concrete conditions that define the lived experience of the working class.
- 19) It is therefore crucial during our discussions to develop a dedicated focus on the measures that we need to adopt in order to tilt the balance of class forces and their consequent social organisations in favour of the working class. The SACP's political programme to develop the capacity required to become the most advanced and resolute section and therefore the leading organisational force of the working class, and to build working class power and hegemony in all key sites of struggle and significant centres of power, remains as relevant as ever. The degree of importance of this historical task has actually increased with enormous responsibility on the shoulders of the Party in the NDR. The programme needs to find profound expression in our approach to a reconfigured Alliance, as well as in our handling of the other two important and related questions, namely the forging of a progressive left popular front and the widest

possible patriotic front that we agreed has also become necessary.

The world Communist movement and the formation of our Alliance, its development and evolutionary reconfiguration

- 20) Another important lesson we should pay attention to is the historical development of the theory and practice of the formation of alliances by the Communist Party as produced by the Communist International (Comintern) in 1920 at its Second Congress. This contribution came from the Commission on the National and Colonial Question. The Commission adopted two theses. The development of one thesis was led by Vladimir Lenin. The development of the other, which became a supplementary thesis, was led by Manabendra Nath Roy from India.
- 21) In his presentation to the Fourth Session of the Congress Lenin reported:

...I would like to emphasise the question of the bourgeois-democratic movement in the backward countries. This was the point that gave rise to some differences of opinion. We debated whether it is correct in principle and theoretically to declare that... the Communist Parties have a duty to support the bourgeois-democratic movements in the backward countries, and the outcome of this discussion was that we came to the unanimous decision to talk not about the 'bourgeois-democratic' movement but only about the national-revolutionary movement. There can be no doubt of the fact that any nationalist movement can only be a bourgeois-democratic movement, because the great mass of the population of the backward countries consists of the peasantry, which is the representative of bourgeois capitalist relations. It would be utopian to think that proletarian parties, insofar as it is at all possible for them to arise in these countries, will be able to carry out Communist tactics and Communist policies in the backward countries without having a definite relationship with the peasant movement, without supporting it in deeds. But objections were raised that, if we say 'bourgeois-democratic', we



lose the distinction between the reformist and revolutionary movement which has become quite clear in the backward countries and the colonies recently, simply because the imperialist bourgeoisie has done everything in its power to create a reformist movement among the oppressed peoples too. A certain understanding has emerged between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and that of the colonies, so that very often, even perhaps in most cases, the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, although they also support national movements, nevertheless fight against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes with a certain degree of agreement with the imperialist bourgeoisie, that is to say together with it. This was completely proven in the Commission, and we believed that the only correct thing would be to take this difference into consideration and to replace the words 'bourgeois-democratic' almost everywhere with the expression 'national-revolutionary'. The point about this is that as communists we will only support the bourgeois freedom movements in the colonial countries if these movements are really revolutionary and if their representatives are not opposed to us training and organising the peasantry in a

revolutionary way. If that is no good, then the communists there also have a duty to fight against the reformist bourgeoisie, to which the heroes of the Second International also belong. There are already reformist parties in the colonial countries, and on occasion their representatives call themselves Social Democrats or Socialists. This distinction is now made in all the Theses, and I think that our point of view is thus formulated much more precisely.

22) It is this perspective that, by and large, formed the theoretical foundation of our Alliance. The origin of the Alliance was, accordingly, elaborated in the 1928 resolution of the Comintern on the South African Question. The resolution, which was adopted by the Executive Committee of the Comintern following its Sixth Congress, and which was ratified by the Communist Party in South Africa at its Annual Conference in January 1929, states:

The Party should pay particular attention to the embryonic national organisations among the natives, such as the African National Congress. The Party, while retaining its full independence, should participate in these organisations, and should seek to broaden and extend their activity. Our aim should be to transform the African National Congress into a fighting

nationalist revolutionary organisation against the white bourgeoisie and the British imperialists, based upon the trade unions, peasant organisations, etc., developing systematically the leadership of the workers and the Communist Party in this organisation. The Party should seek to weaken the influence of the native chiefs corrupted by the White bourgeoisie over the existing native tribal organisations by developing peasants' organisations and spreading among them the influence of the Communist Party. The development of a national-revolutionary movement of the toilers of South Africa against the white bourgeoisie and British imperialism constitutes one of the major tasks of the Communist Party of South Africa.

- 23) Read in conjunction with the excerpt from Lenin's presentation, the above passage correctly summarises the nature of the capitalist class structure that characterised the South African society. This comprised of 'the toilers of South Africa', Black and White – i.e. the working class as a whole. The working class was to numerically increase and accordingly surpass the peasants – we return to this point. However, Black workers in particular were the subject of racist exploitation and subjugation, while the state developed White privileges for their White counterparts who became better off but who were themselves still exploited in class terms.
- 24) As identified in the resolution, the development of capitalist relations in South Africa did not alter the general colonial character of the country's economy. The British bourgeoisie continued to occupy principal economic positions, such as in the banks, mines and industry. They formed an axis of exploitation with the South African bourgeoisie who were equally interested in the merciless exploitation of Black workers. The collaboration, discussed in the excerpt from Lenin, between the foreign imperialist bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie, who in the case of South Africa were the White only bourgeoisie, thus took the form of a racist axis of exploitation in relation to Black workers. This is the context in which colonial oppression was articulated and prevailed along the lines of race and gender and colonialism of a special type (to which we return) was developed. Accordingly,

in addition to the patriarchal domination that women of all races experienced, and over and above racist national oppression, Black women experienced (either directly or indirectly if not both) the merciless class exploitation that was suffered by Black workers in general.

- 25) These are part and parcel of the realities that the Alliance was formed to bring to an end. In the course of the struggle, the configuration of the Alliance assumed various forms. This adaptation was necessary. In order for the Alliance to remain relevant, it had to keep pace with the times.

The Congress Alliance

- 26) In the decade of the 1950s for example, the Alliance was reconfigured and took the form of the Congress Alliance which organised the Congress of the People where the *Freedom Charter* was adopted in 1955. In abstract terms the Congress Alliance comprised of five official Congress formations, while in concrete reality it comprised of six. The sixth was, 'underground', the Communist Party. This reconfiguration was, but by no means exclusively, a response to the banning of the Communist Party, the first non-racial political organisation in South Africa. The Party was banned under the apartheid regime's Suppression of Communist Act in 1950.
- 27) While the banning was obviously ideological – i.e. anti-Communist, it was precipitated by what became the 'Golden Decade' of the Communist Party. This was characterised by a thoroughly independent agitation and propagation of working class struggles in the 1940s against the racist capitalist ruling class and its economic domination. The strike by the 76 000 strong Black mineworkers in 1946 epitomises that role. It was the Communist Party that played one of the most advanced and resolute leadership roles in the building of trade unions and in pushing and supporting the strike.
- 28) Following its banning, and what became a tactical dissolution in anticipation of the suppression, the Communist Party subsequently reconstituted itself underground under the name of the SACP. During this period the Party could not be identified as part of the Congress Alliance. Neither could its continuing existence be publicly confirmed in the first place. The Party only openly announced its existence in

1961, a year after the ANC and other political organisations were banned. The announcement was preceded, in 1959, by the publication of the historic first issue of the *African Communist* with its clandestine characteristics in the context of the illegality that prevailed at that time.

29) Of the five Congress formations that were openly part of the Congress Alliance in the 1950s, the South African Indian Congress (formed from the unification of the Cape, Natal and Transvaal Indian Congress formations), the Coloured Peoples' Congress, the Congress of Democrats and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu), were all led by Communists. The exception was the ANC, which had itself started forging the co-operation in the lead up to the 1950s. On 9 March 1947 the ANC, represented by its President Dr Alfred Xuma, entered into a co-operation agreement, known as the 'Three Doctors Pact', with the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congress formations represented respectively by Dr Gangathura Naicker and Dr Yusuf Dadoo. The latter was elected the Chairperson of the SACP Central Committee in 1953 at the Congress that reconstituted the Communist Party underground in response of its banning.

30) It is important to underline not only the fact that other Congress Alliance formations were led by Communists but also the fact that while the ANC President Albert Luthuli was himself not necessarily a Communist, his closest comradely collaborator to whom he always referred when a strategic decision had to be made was Moses Kotane, SACP General Secretary. In addition, shortly before the Congress of the People, the ANC Secretary-General Walter Sisulu had joined the Communist Party. Over and above that, Sisulu became part of the Party Central Committee and, later, together with Kotane and Michael Harmel (a.k.a. A. Lerumo), one of its high level three-member Politburo.

31) Communists went on to play one of the important roles in the Congress Alliance processes of consultation and drafting of the *Freedom Charter*. Some of them found themselves faced with banning orders and other forms of restrictions imposed by the apartheid regime. Those affected could therefore not attend the Congress of the People. However, where possible they

observed its proceedings from a distance. For example Joe Slovo, a member of the Communist Party since the 1940s and a founding member of the Congress of Democrats (formed in 1953), could not attend the Congress of the People despite contributing to the drafting of the *Freedom Charter*. He watched its proceedings using binoculars from a nearby location. One of the leading members of the SACP until his death in 1995, Slovo represented the Congress of Democrats in the National Consultative Committee of the Congress Alliance.

Organisational transformation and Alliance reconfiguration

32) The Alliance was reconfigured again following the dissolution of the Congress of Democrats, the South African Indian Congress and the Coloured People's Congress. Unlike before, the ANC thenceforth organised everybody in its rank and file regardless of their race. This was a direct result of a decision, adopted at its watershed Consultative Conference held in 1969 in Morogoro, Tanzania, to admit people of all races in its membership – though not yet in its leadership. The ANC only opened its leadership ranks to people of all races 16 years after its Morogoro Conference. This decision was taken at its Consultative Conference held in 1985 in Kabwe, Zambia. The majority of White and Indian comrades largely came from the ranks of the Communist Party, and others also from the ranks of the joint SACP and ANC military wing, uMkhonto weSizwe (MK). Like the Communist Party, the MK also organised people of all races.

33) The transformation of the ANC to organise people of all races did not occur in the abstract. Neither can it be understood completely in isolation of, among other factors, the non-racial history of the Communist Party, the role played by Communists and the mutual influence that was brought about by the principle of dual membership. The banning of the Communist Party in 1950 for example had the effect of strengthening an already existing principle of dual membership between the Party and the ANC. Communists who were African swelled the ranks of the ANC, while those who were Coloured, Indian and White swelled the ranks of the respective Congress Alliance formations.

The Mass Democratic Movement and Alliance reconfiguration

- 34) The 1980s produced yet another important reconfiguration of the Alliance and this was solidified in the early 1990s. This came from the intensification of mass mobilisation as a pillar of our liberation struggle. The struggle comprised of three other related pillars, namely underground organisation (dating back to the banning of the Communist Party in 1950 and thus to the response of the Party to reconstitute itself underground), the armed struggle (dating back to the formation of the MK in 1961), and the international isolation of the apartheid regime (including associated work in exile).
- 35) The formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) in 1985 necessitated its replacement of Sactu in the Alliance. Cosatu became Sactu's successor. The political history of the realignment produced by the decade of the 1980s was itself nevertheless connected to the previous decade of the 1970s. The militant 1973 Durban Strikes in many ways contributed to the consolidation of the progressive trade union movement. The formation in the 1980s of the trade unions that became Cosatu affiliates, and the mergers that contributed to the formation of some of those unions, were in many ways inspired by the militant struggles of the previous decade.
- 36) The development of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) in the 1980s became one of the important innovations in the history of Alliance reconfiguration. The United Democratic Front (UDF) was added to the equation and played an important role towards the final defeat of the apartheid regime. The South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco) was formed in 1992 as part of the MDM. Sanco took the form of a unitary formation replacing pre-existing local and regional civics. Some of the civics emerged in the previous decade of the 1980s as characterised organisationally by the development of the MDM and the consolidation of the progressive trade union movement. While the UDF was later dissolved, Sanco continued organising and was later recognised as an Alliance component.
- 37) The Reconstruction and Development

Programme (RDP) was a product of the Alliance reconfiguration of the 1980s and early 1990s. The economic policy entitled Growth, Employment and Redistribution (Gear), introduced by government in 1996 and then declared to be non-negotiable, undermined the democratic political process that was followed in the development of the RDP as well as its progressive policy content. It was through Gear that the imperialist driven wave of neoliberalism was domestically imposed. This unravelled the policy cohesion that the Alliance (and the broader MDM) had consolidated through the adoption of the RDP, which was our platform for the first general election held in April 1994.

- 38) The Alliance was consequently plunged into a crisis of policy tussles. The SACP faced an attempt at booting it out of the Alliance unless it stopped its opposition to Gear. This played itself out during the ANC's messages to the 10th Congress of the Party held in 1998. The Congress stayed the course, reiterated the SACP's opposition to Gear, called for an appropriate macroeconomic framework and to this end directed the Party to continue engaging the government. The substantial leadership change that occurred at the 52nd National Conference of the ANC in Polokwane, December 2007, a decade after Gear was imposed, was in part a direct result of the policy tensions within the Alliance as the SACP and Cosatu pushed for a policy change. We return to what happened later.

Conservative and bourgeois reformist tendencies and the rise of the parasitic lumpen bourgeoisie – impact on the Alliance

- 39) The Communist Party and the ANC remained the primary political formations of the Alliance throughout its development in class struggle as an *uninterrupted* course of constant contradictions but which is not always open but at times hidden. This therefore did not happen smoothly. There was opposition from both sides initially – i.e. following the adoption of the 1928-1929 resolution on the South African Question which formally established the Alliance.
- 40) The CPSA's adoption in 1929 of the 1928 Comintern resolution on the national question in South Africa marked, in principle, a major strategic and programmatic step forward for the

Party. However, sectarianism on the one hand and a lukewarm embrace of the Black Republic thesis on the other, meant that the full value of pursuing a national revolutionary, or national democratic, strategic line was not realised at the time. The Party dwindled in influence with factional expulsions considerably influenced by events in the Soviet Union. From the mid-1930s, the Party began to recover organisationally thanks to the influence of Moses Kotane who, in his important 1934 'Cradock Letter', warned the Party of the dangers of internal factionalism, based on faraway debates in the Soviet Union. Kotane had located himself in the rural Eastern Cape at the time. He was influenced, in part, by the work of a breakaway and more radical Independent ANC in the Cape Province active amongst the rural masses. In his letter to the Party, Kotane wrote: 'My first suggestion is that the party become more Africanised...that the CPSA must pay special attention to South Africa, study the conditions in this country and concretise the demands of the toiling masses from first-hand information, that we must speak the language of the Native masses and must know their demands. That while it must not lose its international allegiance, the Party must be Bolshevised and become South African not only theoretically, but in reality, it should be a Party working in the interests [of] and for the toiling people in South Africa'.

41) This practical reorientation was to become the bed-rock of the CPSA's emergence as a major force. It is important to note Kotane's insistence on rootedness within the South African reality. It is also important to note that he does not speak narrowly of the 'working class', but rather of the 'toiling masses', of the 'toiling people in South Africa'. In 1935 the 17th Comintern Congress adopted a new, less sectarian line calling for broad popular fronts against the growing danger of fascism in Europe. This change of strategic line in the Comintern helped the CPSA to move beyond its own sectarianism. However, the strategic and programmatic perspective of an anti-colonial national revolutionary, or national democratic movement, was not taken forward within the Party at this time. Indeed, it was only in the late-1950s and 60s, in the context of growing national liberation struggles in the Third World, that the Party in South Africa returned to the 1928/9 Black Republic

strategic perspective and its related imperative of a national revolutionary alliance. This was particularly consolidated in the SACP's 1962 'Road to South African Freedom' programme which developed the concept of Colonialism of a Special Type (CST) to characterise the South African situation.

42) Anti-Communist tendencies nevertheless remained in existence within the ANC and became acute, or even dominant, during certain historical moments despite the fact that opposition to the Alliance was officially overcome on both its side and that of the Communist Party. This upset the unity of the Alliance and had the effect of eventually dividing and weakening the ANC itself. The early 1930s was one of the worst periods in our Alliance relations. This was in part highlighted by the divisive manner in which Pixley ka Isaka Seme was elected to the position of ANC President. Josiah Gumede, who was removed from the position, was very friendly to Communists. He also expressed a welcoming appreciation towards socialism following a visit to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. His removal was therefore not a mere ANC internal affair. It was a conservative reaction to a fraternal relationship with the Communist Party and to socialism. The ANC almost evaporated and accordingly became ineffectual. It was revived at its Jubilee Conference in 1937. Communists Thabo Mofutsanyane, J.B. Marks and Moses Kotane, working together with other ANC leaders, played an important role in its revival.

43) However, it is important to indicate that antagonism towards Communists in the ANC engendered its own negative response among some within the Communist Party. And this was not least against hostile members but in certain respects also towards the Party's alliance with the ANC as a whole. Both the Communist Party and the ANC historically succeeded in managing the ebbs and flows of the friction. Past manifestations of the conflict seem to have appeared, though not exclusively, in the form of either veiled or overt attacks on dual membership and associated leadership elections. However, dual membership as an activist principle contributed, and in no small measure, in overcoming the tension. In this regard it is necessary to underline that, in terms of the principle, it is mandatory for all Communist cadres to become active ANC members but,

and correctly so, it is not mandatory for ANC members to join the Communist Party.

- 44) The present process to achieve Alliance reconfiguration has important lessons to draw from the history of outstanding contributions made by the correct practice of dual membership.
- 45) However, it is also important to indicate that dual membership has not been without its own challenges. For instance all Party members are required to observe the principle of democratic centralism – i.e. freedom of discussion and unity of action, a dialectical combination of democracy under central guidance and centralism on the basis of democracy. In the same vein, they are required also to set an example of loyalty, hard work and zeal in the performance of their duties in the fraternal formations in which they are active, and are thus bound by the discipline and decisions of such organisations. It is possible that some members have not been able to always strike a balance between these principles. In this regard there are at least two points that might be worth making.
- 45.1) Firstly, it is important, while still upholding their organisational independence, to not confuse or treat the mass character of any of our fraternal formations as synonymous with the broad masses.
- 45.2) Secondly, it is important to avoid being negative towards the whole of any of our fraternal mass formations as a result of antagonistic members within their rank and file and leadership organs. It is crucial to dissect all organisational situations in order to properly grasp the role of the Communist Party and one's own tasks as a Communist cadre. Communists must not push a narrow or self-interested perspective within the Alliance, nor remain oblivious to the fact that the ANC – partly as a result of the role that the SACP has played - continues to enjoy support from broad sections of the popular masses.
- 46) The unity of the SACP is sacrosanct both towards a reconfigured Alliance and a successful execution of the Party's historical mission. This requires a correct appreciation of the tasks of the Party and individual Communist cadres not only in relation to the ANC and our other Alliance partners Cosatu and Sanco but also in relation to the broad masses of the working class as a whole.

- 47) It now suffices, in addition to what has already been covered, to proceed more extensively to our post-1994 Alliance reality but in the historical context that goes back to the Second Congress of the Comintern.

National-revolutionary, bourgeois reformist and the lumpen parasitic bourgeoisie

- 48) In this regard, the main question is whether the characterisation 'national-revolutionary' (i.e. as detailed in Lenin's presentation) that has guided the formation of most alliances by Communists in various colonies had not become the victim of domination by bourgeois reformist tendencies. This question is very important, more so in the context that prevailed after our liberation alliance dislodged the apartheid regime and ascended to government headed by the ANC.
- 49) To the extent the answer is that the characterisation 'national-revolutionary', or the Alliance as formed on the characterisation as its premise, became dominated by bourgeois reformist tendencies, then our call for a reconfigured Alliance emerged, either in part or in whole, as a direct response to the crisis that thereby followed. To that extent, the development of the crisis post-1994 dates back to the emergence of the 1996 class project and its neoliberal economic policy of Gear. The SACP has produced a volume of writings on the problem of the 1996 class project for reference. Instead of being completely overcome after the ANC's 52nd National Conference held in Polokwane in 2007, the crisis declined for a while and then returned not only with a force of greater magnitude but with the worst of corruption embedded characteristics. The crisis reached its height by the time of our Party 14th Congress.
- 50) What compounded the situation is that what we found ourselves faced with is not merely a bourgeois reformist tendency. Neither is it a bourgeois-democratic tendency in the classical definition of the concept. As we had said, we increasingly found ourselves faced with a parasitic bourgeois tendency – and, it must be added – of a lumpen type. That is, if you like, the parasitic lumpen bourgeoisie and its patronage networks. It was in this context that corporate capture of key levers of the state and sections of our movement took off aggressively, unabated

and in most cases openly encouraged. The role played by the SACP in the run-up to Polokwane was in no way intended to produce what happened years later – the diametrical opposite.

51) Rogue intelligence units and a quasi-state organisation operating in parallel to but parasitically dependent of our state was set up. What exhibited the features of a securocrat state was then unleashed against the Communist Party and others who became vocal against state capture. State and other key public service appointments and deployment decisions were increasingly being made in the interest of driving or defending the rot. Those decisions were thus made without consultation, let alone with the Alliance, which became increasingly marginalised, but also with the ANC itself. Looting was enforced as part of the culture and core agenda of this dominant section of the officialdom. Those who were vocal against the capture were dismissed from their appointments. In addition, some were isolated and targeted with all sorts of smear campaigns and other attacks. Undemocratic politics of factionalism, including gate keeping, were entrenched. Divisions and disunity took root.

52) The democratic revolutionary values that our Alliance developed in its historical evolution, and which succeeded in holding it together during the difficult conditions it has gone through (e.g. banning, banishment, all sorts of

suppression, including imprisonment, torture and harassment, and throughout the years of exile), were generally undermined. The decades old principle of dual membership became a focus of anti-Communist attacks. Narrow sectarian interests gained ground and were in many ways either overtly or covertly encouraged. The killing of comrades, with the Communist Party for example in the provinces of Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal, as the first target, emerged and continued as if there were no law enforcement authorities to stop the rot and arrest the criminals and those behind them.

53) The lumpen parasites appropriated sections of the movement. They also attributed its achievements to themselves. In the process, they inevitably disconnected the movement from the masses. As Lenin once argued, the masses are robbed during peace times but the conscious ones revolt. The Communist Party and other revolutionary as well as progressive sections both of our movement and society at large did indeed revolt. But this took time to gel and solidify. We must learn from what happened. The disconnection had already entrenched with adverse effects. The ANC's electoral performance declined. This became a firmly established trend. There were major electoral losses. The ANC was, for example, dislodged from government in various parts of the country in 2016. This is the context in which the Alliance lost the Johannesburg, Tshwane and Nelson Mandela metropolitan municipalities



and other municipalities elsewhere, in addition to the losses suffered in almost the entire Western Cape Province and which deepened.

- 54) The movement's multiracial support was ruined and its non-racial credentials undermined. Major electoral losses in historically Coloured and Indian communities emerged and were entrenched. Support or appeal among progressive White people was weakened. While there are structural underpinnings behind these trends, and which need attention, we must not underestimate the damage that was caused by what played itself out as racially hostile, narrow Africanist and Black chauvinist currents that found traction within certain sections of our movement. The rot of corporate capture of sections of our state and movement in fact entrenched such currents and exploited their rhetoric.

The Second Congress of the Comintern – the Supplementary Thesis from the Commission on the Colonial and National Question

- 55) Presented by Roy at the Fourth Session of the Congress after Lenin delivered the main thesis (as formerly indicated), the supplementary thesis did anticipate, as the main thesis did in fact do as well, some of the above negative bourgeois reformist and narrow nationalist tendencies. The supplementary thesis dwelled on the tendencies in great descriptive and in response programmatic detail. Its point of departure was that the most important task was to establish exactly the mutual relations between the world Communist movement and the revolutionary movement in the politically oppressed countries dominated by their own national bourgeoisie – but who were themselves the subordinates of the foreign bourgeoisie who were at the centre of the imperialist regime.
- 56) In hindsight, it could be argued that the relationship between the British imperialist bourgeoisie and the White bourgeoisie of South Africa (as formerly highlighted from the 1928-1929 resolution on the South African Question) mirrored the above description. India and China were mentioned as examples in the text of the supplementary thesis. It was concluded that the capitalist core of the imperialist system underdeveloped the oppressed countries

to facilitate imperialist exploitation of their resources and labour for super-profits.

- 57) The revolution's first step was thus identified as that of removing the foreign domination. However, the report underlined a programmatic condition:

The struggle to overthrow foreign domination in the colonies does not therefore mean underwriting the national aims of the national bourgeoisie but much rather smoothing the path to liberation for the proletariat of the colonies. (Emphasis added.)

- 58) Based on the above, diverging tendencies in liberation struggles were identified as follows:

...Two movements can be discerned which are growing further and further apart with every day that passes. One of them is the bourgeois-democratic nationalist movement, which pursues the programme of political liberation with the conservation of the capitalist order; the other is the struggle of the propertyless peasants for their liberation from every kind of exploitation. The first movement attempts, often with success, to control the second. (Emphasis added.)

- 59) There is an important point related to the above that merits underlining. This concerns the class structure that emerged in societies such as ours. The process of capitalist production produced a numerically increased working class which by far surpassed and accordingly replaced the peasants. The latter numerically diminished largely due to proletarianisation – i.e. conversion into wage labourers. This occurred as a result of the colonial and apartheid dispossession that was brought about by capitalist expansion and imposition, as well as by its associated tax and labour regimes. Thus it is correct to replace almost all references to the 'peasants' in the excerpts from or attributions to both Roy and Lenin with the 'proletariat' or broadly the 'working class'.

- 60) Flowing from the above, the task of the Communist Party was defined as that of fighting against any control of the working class movement (*which seeks liberation from every kind of exploitation*)

by the bourgeois-democratic nationalist movement (*which pursues political liberation with the conservation of the capitalist order*). The Party's responsibilities included the development of the class consciousness of the propertyless working masses. The most important objective was, accordingly, to build a strong and capable Communist Party organisation rooted among the masses. This Party organisation was assigned with the duty of developing a leading role in the struggle of the working class to achieve complete liberation and social emancipation – rather than expect these two inextricably linked goals to be delivered, something that would not happen, by capitalist production.

61) Capitalism has showed that the thesis was right. More and more the wealth produced from the process of production under its auspices is concentrated in the hands of a few, the bourgeoisie. By the end of 2017 for example, the richest 1 per cent of the bourgeoisie privately owned half of the world's wealth. South Africa is in fact now recognised as one of the countries that are at the forefront of the world's worst inequalities. Meanwhile, it is the working class, which remains poor, that generally produces the wealth privately appropriated by the capitalists.

62) Regardless, in our movement there are some quarters that are concerned with achieving inclusion in the private amassing of wealth from capital's exploitation of labour. This is their version of economic empowerment. Accordingly, by radical economic transformation they mean not advancing and deepening the process of complete liberation and social emancipation of the working class from all forms of bondage, and in this case class exploitation and inequality. They mean not the real, second radical phase of the NDR. They mean, in the name of empowering Africans in particular and Black people in general, entrenching their Black capitalist private empowerment as individuals in the sea of mass poverty and structurally high unemployment and class inequality. While we all agree about the necessity for the empowerment of the historically oppressed, there are therefore diverging views about its class character. This is one of the contradictions facing the Alliance at present.

63) Related to the above, the proletariat was

severely affected by the problem of neoliberal restructuring, inclusive of 'cost cuts' and profit maximisation strategies. This increased retrenchments, and thus contributed to the high level of unemployment that has become persistent. Outsourcing or out-contracting both in industry and the state, and privatisation, related tenderisation and agentification in the state have contributed to the fragmentation of the proletariat and the rise of different layers of semi-peripheralised and peripheralised workers whose conditions are inferior compared to those regarded as either core workers or as involved in 'core' operations. This process was also driven through labour brokering, casualisation and other measures that increasingly shifted employment relationships from permanent employment relationships to temporary employment relationships with comparatively insecure conditions and deeper levels of exploitation. Some of the worst affected sections of workers became difficult to unionise due to their high levels of insecurity.

64) Many of these strategies have been used, including through Black Economic Empowerment in its narrow articulation, to drive inclusion in capitalist accumulation of wealth. Subsequent struggles have contributed to the growing mistrust and political disconnect with adverse effects not only on the ANC, in part based on the prevailing economic policy trajectory, but also on the Alliance in its current form. A reconfigured Alliance cannot be oblivious to these and other problematic realities. On the contrary, it must confront them head-on through a new policy programme underpinned by a decisive elaboration of revolutionary democracy as part and parcel of the key pillars of the second radical phase of the NDR.

65) Our Party's 14th Congress resolution to develop a leading role towards a reconfigured Alliance and start a process of forging a progressive left popular front, as well as a widest possible patriotic front, seems to have returned us to the theoretical basis of the Alliance (to re-examine it afresh). What a reconfigured Alliance should look like – i.e. what its nature and character should be – is therefore not merely a question of form, of organisational practices, of styles of work, of leadership style, of how it functions. It is, equally important, a substantive matter of

political theory. It is, in other words, equally importantly also a question of the theory of struggle.

66) For example, while the historical reconfigurations of the Alliance thus far highlighted are a practical expression of organisational renewal and adaptation to changing conditions, the reality is that political theory played an important role. For instance, the 1928-1929 resolution that founded our Alliance was underpinned by a political theory and programme. Further, in addition to but still linked with the *Freedom Charter*, the reconfigurations that followed were also based on or brought about innovations in our, and indeed the whole Alliance's political theory and programme. The next section takes this reconfiguration perspective forward.

Colonialism of a special type and the NDR

67) The 1928-1929 resolution on the South African Question not only articulated the theoretical basis of our alliance but also put forward a programmatic, ideological and political content. It was this resolution that introduced the political programme for a 'native' *republic with equal rights for people of all races*. In 1962, the SACP Political Programme, the *Road to South African Freedom* introduced a shift from the 'native' thesis of the resolution. The shift was consolidated through the theory of the NDR as we know it, but with the *Freedom Charter*, anchored on the principles of non-racialism and non-sexism, entrenched as its basic programme.

68) The *Road to South African Freedom* further introduced an analysis of South Africa as a colony of special type. The theoretical basis of the concept of CST had however been laid down in the 1928-1929 resolution. The resolution characterised South Africa as a British dominion of the colonial type. There was a further theoretical innovation in 1950 by the Party through its report to its Annual Conference. This characterised South Africa as exhibiting the features both of a colonial and imperialist state at the same time.

69) In so far as it was imperialist, the South African state held the majority oppressed and ensured that they were exploited and mercilessly suppressed on a racist basis as a source of super cheap labour. They had been colonially and were still

being expropriated legislatively and, further, forcibly under the auspices of the racist capitalist legislation. As a colonial state, South Africa was subordinated to Britain and increasingly the rest of the imperialist metropolises. While the SACP appeared to be shifting from this perspective in the *Road to South African Freedom*, in essence the Party gave the perspective a more dialectical elaboration.

70) In 1928 the Comintern resolution on South Africa correctly asserted that the formation of an 'independent' Union of South Africa in 1910 did not resolve the national question, but rather represented the continued dominance of external imperialist forces (notably British monopoly capital) but working in alliance with an emerging (White) South African capitalist class in a shared colonially oppressive agenda. The SACP's 1962 Programme, *The Road to South African Freedom*, with its concept of colonialism of a special type (CST) re-connected with this understanding of the double character of colonial/national oppression in South Africa (with both an external and an internal dimension). However, by the early 1960s, domestic monopoly capital had grown considerably, linked closely to apartheid state monopoly capital grouped around the mineral-energy complex. In this context, then, greater emphasis in the 1962 programme fell on the INTERNAL dimension of CST oppression – without neglecting the role of Western imperialism in its continued support of white minority rule in South Africa.

71) The NDR, as such, was not conceived of as only a process of struggle to overcome the 'colonisers of a special type' who lived in the territory of South Africa but also the foreign imperialist bourgeoisie. Neither was it conceived of as a process of struggle to do away with foreign imperialist bourgeoisie domination in favour of building new strata of the national bourgeoisie to take over the reign of foreign imperialist and domestic racist exploiters in the exploitation of the masses.

72) The NDR theory asserted the necessity for a national democratic state – i.e. 'the state of national democracy' – in the context of non-racialism, non-sexism, shared prosperity and egalitarianism. The ending of patriarchy was therefore as important as the objectives of resolving the national and class contradictions.

The introduction of the theory of the NDR in the *Road to South African Freedom* again placed the Alliance as a national democratic revolutionary front at the centre of our struggle. The theory and the analysis of South Africa as a colony of a special type found expression in the historic ANC Morogoro Strategy and Tactics and were endorsed by all Alliance formations as it was the case with the *Freedom Charter*.

- 73) On the part of the Communist Party, resolving class contradictions not only called for a socialist revolution which is both fundamentally necessary but also meant that the Party must, within the terrain of the NDR and with the NDR as the road to socialism in our historical conditions, elaborate socialist oriented or non-capitalist development measures. This required an assertive exercise of Party independence.
- 74) It is therefore very crucial to emphasise that, at least from the point of view of the historical background of our Alliance, its reconfiguration is not merely about changing its modus operandi – absolutely important as that is. Equally if perhaps not more important, the reconfiguration of the Alliance is a matter of democratic policy substance with wider acceptance.

Growing fault-lines in the Party in the late 1980s and early 1990s

- 75) For the SACP in the late 1980s the reality was thoroughly complex. Inside the country, the popularity of the Party had surged tremendously

within the context of the rolling semi-insurrectionary waves of struggle associated with the mass democratic movement and localised popular power initiatives. This popularity was testament to the role that the underground SACP was playing both organisationally and ideologically within the popular and trade union movements, as well as in MK. At the same time, the international legacy within which the Party had been located since its inception was now in serious crisis, with the Soviet Union and its wider East European bloc in what was soon to prove to be terminal stagnation.

- 76) This conjuncture saw several different tendencies opening up within the ranks of the SACP. On the one hand there were tendencies towards disbelief and denialism about the depth of the crisis in the Soviet bloc, and therefore a tendency towards rejecting the need for a radical renewal of the socialist project. On the other hand, the reality of the crisis drove other Party members towards a liquidationist perspective – a view that the SACP (and communist parties in general) had outlived their usefulness. This second current, in the mid-1990s was to emerge as the '1996 class project', as the SACP at the time characterised it. Led by former communists, this anti-Party tendency was strongly influenced by right-wing Western social democratic forces at the time, what was later called the Third Way and associated internationally with the likes of Tony Blair, Francois Mitterand, and Bill Clinton. The majority of the SACP leadership associated



with this current resigned from the Party in 1990, or drifted off in subsequent years.

77) The leadership that was consolidated around Joe Slovo and Chris Hani in the early 1990s rejected both the denialist and the liquidationist tendencies, and led a major organisational and strategic renewal and growth process. To understand the role of the Slovo/Hani leadership in the early 1990s it is important to trace some background. In the two-and-a-half decades from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, the SACP leadership was located outside of the country in exile with a relatively small underground presence within South Africa. In the mid-1960s the entire ANC-led liberation movement had suffered a major strategic defeat. The movement had to be re-built, initially largely in exile. In this 1965-1985 period the Party played an absolutely central role in helping to rebuild the ANC and notably MK. At the time, Party membership never numbered more than two or three thousand members and it was largely based on carefully targeted recruitment. Under the leadership of Moses Kotane in this difficult period the Party deliberately subsumed its independent visibility, focusing on the difficult task of rebuilding a shattered ANC-led liberation movement. The ANC is one of the few movements of the 20th century to have emerged stronger and more united from an extended period of exile and diaspora. The SACP's role in this was central.

78) However, the rising wave of popular struggle within South Africa in the course of the 1980s presented new challenges. In particular, anti-capitalist ideas within the labour and mass democratic movement enjoyed growing support, but these anti-capitalist views were often eclectic and quite independent of the SACP's influence. It was in this context that the newly elected Party General Secretary, Joe Slovo, moved for the SACP to once again more openly organise and agitate in its own name, while supporting the broader ANC movement as well. This more independent and more open positioning of the Party from 1985 was then to inform the position taken by the Slovo-Hani leadership in the early 1990s.

79) Some of those associated with the liquidationist tendency remained on within the Party in the first half of the 1990s. Many of them were from exile

and they attempted to preserve the SACP but as a small, elitist 'vanguard' force without a strong and independent socialist and anti-capitalist profile. In this context a new debate emerged within the Party in the early 1990s, should the Party be a 'mass' or a 'vanguard' Party? At the Party's congresses of the 1990s, the simplistic either/or approach was rejected. As the Party later concluded in its Programme, *The South African Road to socialism*:

The fact that the Party is in an alliance must not lead to the dissolution of the Party into that alliance, nor should it seek to duplicate the role of any of its alliance partners. Similarly in leading or participating in sectoral mass struggles and other mass formations we should not turn the party into a sectoral mass-based formation. We seek to build a large, but vanguard Party. A large party is not necessarily a mass party, as the size of the Party is not a fixed number of members, but is determined by the tasks at hand. (Emphasis added).

80) In its continuing analysis of the balance of class forces and the line-up of political parties in relation to electoral politics in the early 1990s, the SACP drew its lessons from the wisdom that was behind developing the Alliance to become a united, revolutionary-democratic front in the battle to bring down oppression. The Party thus strategically chose not to divide the electoral base of our struggle for liberation and social emancipation. This decision was in favour of a united – i.e. a single Alliance platform headed by the ANC. The SACP and other Alliance components have accordingly been campaigning to secure electoral victories under the banner of the ANC-headed Alliance.

The Alliance became united under a single ANC-led electoral contest, but there was an increasing contradiction, a tangent on state power

81) What happened from the above is that important governance decisions – i.e. policy, deployment and accountability decisions – were increasingly being made by or within the ANC alone. The exercise of state power assumed the characteristics of the same tendency and became susceptible to factional manipulation and abuse. This caused other serious problems in the context

of the developing post-1994 reality in which state power and related governance processes became an important pillar of the NDR. Except for mass organisation and therefore mass mobilisation, the other pre-1994 pillars of our struggle were correctly abandoned. Our armed struggle combatants were integrated into the state-led national defence force. There was no need to continue with the underground pillar of the struggle. International isolation of the apartheid regime was also no longer necessary since the regime was dislodged. The state became responsible for international relations and co-operation on behalf of our democratically elected government and society as a whole. Related to this, nevertheless, were party-to-party relations and international solidarity which remained important organisationally and politically.

82) The other Alliance partners and their voices were by and large increasingly confined or shifted to extra-parliamentary and protest politics, as well as lobbying to secure a place for their views in Parliament and government. At times the differences that were aired took an oppositionist form. However, even where this was not the case their concerns and campaigns were at times labelled as oppositionist while the problem was in fact with the manner in which the Alliance was configured and functioned, and with the underlying substantive disagreements on policy, deployments and accountability.

83) For instance all Alliance partners have their highest decision making bodies – i.e. their congresses, conferences, national or central executive or central committees. Instead of converging, out of all these, to consolidate a common Alliance platform, a shared and joint programme to take forward under the principle of collective leadership through state power and therefore governance, it is the outcome only of one Alliance partner – the ANC’s highest decision making bodies – that is regarded as an overarching and overriding mandate.

84) The problem of the Alliance’s configuration in its current form was compounded by factionalism. This took root mainly – but not exclusively – in the ANC as its epicentre. What this means is that the other Alliance partners were themselves not necessarily free from the problem of factionalism.

The epicentre is defined as such in this regard as constituted by proximity to the levers of the exercise of state power, including associated deployments and related decision making authority. It is in this context, for example, that competition for control over public resources, including appointments and tenders (which are a function largely of privatisation, outsourcing and a failure or unwillingness to build a capable democratic developmental state), manifests itself in the form of factional contests for leadership positions. This was one of the entry points of corporate capture, including through factional funding in return for tenders and business licences (e.g. mining and water). These problems are rooted in the prevailing social relations of capitalist production – such as class inequality and its underlying labour exploitation by capital, unemployment and poverty.

85) It is important, taking the above into account, to avoid organisational fetishism, including the fetishism of trade union organisations. For example some of the above-mentioned problems have found their way into the trade union movement as well. Among others competition for control over workers’ resources has become one of the major contributors to what appears to be an endless contest for leadership positions. It has also contributed to divisions and fragmentation. Very few organisations – if any at all – can thus be regarded as homogenous and cohesive. It is important to appreciate the mass character of trade unions, its strengths, weaknesses and political implications – not only in relation to the Alliance but also in relation to the question of a popular left front and electoral politics in general. Nothing must be taken for granted.

86) In addition, while the SACP remains relatively the most united of all Alliance components, indeed nothing must be taken for granted with the Party’s own unity and cohesion either. It is therefore crucial for the Party to programmatically reinforce its own internal unity and cohesion. This must be a platform to develop a leading role towards a reconfigured Alliance and to forge principled and programmatic unity of the working class and thus consolidate its political organisation.



87) It is important for everybody to walk the talk with regard to a reconfigured Alliance. For example, while we agreed at the first National Alliance Summit held after Polokwane, in May 2008, that the Alliance must function as a strategic political centre, and that we must develop its capacity to act as such, after a promising start the eventual reality became diametrically opposite and worsened. What prevailed is that those who win over the executive and other decision making organs of the ANC at different spheres of the Alliance take over. Consultation or lack thereof became dependant on the character of their leadership and focus. It is equally important nevertheless to highlight that the strengths and weaknesses of the other Alliance partners at various levels also matter. These do have a contribution on whether consultation occurs and on its extent if it does happen.

88) It is important therefore to appreciate that the reconfiguration process is also a function of and will depend on the balance of class forces. Attention has already been drawn to this question. The importance of the matter cannot be overemphasised. Related to this, it is crucial to recognise that the SACP is not the only one that wants a reconfigured Alliance. There is a genuine commitment from within the ANC towards restoring Alliance relations. Increasing importance has been attached to this commitment following its 54th National Conference held in December 2017 in Nasrec, Johannesburg. However, what the commitment means both in

theory and practice is yet to be detailed. To this extent the important role of a reconfigured Alliance cannot be overemphasised.

89) There is nevertheless a highly problematic version of a 'reconfigured Alliance' that was advocated before Nasrec by some quarters within our movement. It is important to avoid such revisionism from resurfacing and causing problems. Below is a review of Moses Kotane's leadership contribution in building the Alliance. This covers an exposition of the revisionism.

Moses Kotane's intervention and a distorted version of a reconfigured Alliance

90) The SACP and the entire Alliance must combat distortions of the Party's longest serving General Secretary, Moses Kotane, who also served as the Treasurer General of the ANC. Kotane introduced his theoretical exposition notably through his famous 1934 Cradock letter. He developed practical methods of work to implement the theory. He did so working within the framework of collective leadership. Kotane was a historical materialist and materialist dialectician. What he and his collective of leadership did was based on the historical conditions of their time. Nevertheless, there are important lessons to learn from their good leadership example as we combat distortions.

91) It has been alleged that Kotane did not make open public statements but instead worked more by engaging the ANC leadership silently from

behind the scenes. Accordingly, there was a plea to the SACP as a primary target but as well as to the other Alliance partners Cosatu and Sanco to do likewise. This is not only a distortion but a highly problematic version of a reconfigured Alliance.

92) In 1954 for instance Kotane wrote an intervention on what the *Freedom Charter* should entail. The economic clause of the *Charter* for instance could be traced to that open public statement, which was itself an articulation of the Communist Party's 1944 programme – in many ways substantively a forerunner of the *Freedom Charter*. In addition, the volume *South African Communist Speak* contains many open public statements of the Communist Party dating back to its forerunners in 1915 until 1980. What those pushing the distortion of Kotane did not point out is that the ANC's leadership, for example Albert Luthuli, would not make a strategic decision without consulting with Kotane. In fact, if you went to Luthuli with a strategic proposal he asked whether you have raised it with Kotane first. If not, he proposed that you see Kotane and hear what he had to say.

93) In 2015 when we received the repatriated remains of Kotane and JB Marks, the events associated with the process were used to distort Kotane. Extremely worrying, this turned out to have been in defence of the rot of corporate capture of key sections of our state and movement. It was during that year that in fact the last Alliance National Summit was held. The Summit was used as a platform to seek to confine the freedom of expression of other Alliance partners, especially where they disagreed with wrongdoing, to behind-the-scenes engagements.

94) Meanwhile, since that Summit until President Jacob Zuma was recalled in 2018 there was no other National Alliance Summit convened. Space for Alliance consultation was curtailed at different levels. This happened increasingly so under the leadership of those who supported the distortion of Kotane. The chief defect of the outdated modus operandi which rendered the functioning of the Alliance dependent on one component was accordingly exposed for those who care to see. Where space for consultation was curtailed, no amount of the little space that was left for engagement behind closed doors became successful. It would have been a strategic

error for the Party to become publicly silent in the name of behind closed doors engagements while the country was being driven to the brink of a financial crisis.

95) The marginalisation of the Alliance post-1994, dating back to the 1996 class project, was coupled with an illusionary and mechanical separation of the NDR from socialism. This was repeated. The revisionism was underpinned by the rejection of socialism but not capitalism as the strategic objective of the ANC. This implied embedding, if not explicitly pushing for the 'naturalisation' of capitalist production (which was, by the way, colonially imposed) among the strategic objectives of our struggle. This bourgeois reformist agenda was coupled with an attempt to elbow out the SACP from the NDR by attaching the revisionist interpretation to the NDR. The pre-1994 version of this agenda could arguably be traced back to the formerly highlighted suicidal motion, which was rejected by the Communist Party, to dissolve the Party.

96) The failure of the Alliance's configuration in its current form has resulted in the treacherous behaviour of certain sections of its supposed leadership particularly in relation to state power and with the active support of their factions. There has been an inability to call them to order. The disaster that we faced before Nasrec and thereafter until the recall of President Zuma is a typical example. Even if there was order called, this was simply ignored and the situation unfolded as if there was no order called. Alternatively, the order was factionally problematised and then attacked.

97) The foundations for a possible turnaround, dating back to the belated yet historic and widely welcome recall of President Zuma, were laid only after what was almost an irreparable harm. The Alliance has to learn its lessons from what happened, and of course also from the important role its other components played to stop the dangerous situation that was unfolding. The mobilisation that unfolded must be intensified to build the capacity of a reconfigured Alliance to play its role as the strategic political centre of the NDR.

What can we learn from true Kotanism? What should the nature, character and policy platform of a reconfigured Alliance be?

98) The principle that the SACP is now putting forward, that there must be democratic consensus seeking consultation – before all major policy, deployments and accountability decisions are made – as the cornerstone of a reconfigured alliance functioning as a strategic political centre of the NDR is crucial. It is important to underline that this principle is neither a liquidationist position directed at the ANC, nor is it a departure from the strategic character of the Alliance to a coalition politics. It is rather a revolutionary democratic principle of collective leadership within the context of a reconfigured Alliance with state power as well as related governance process having become an important pillar for advancing, deepening and defending the NDR. A reconfigured Alliance must concretise its shared perspective of the NDR and basic programme of the *Freedom Charter* into practical action through a coherent policy articulation and unifying, revolutionary democratic methods of work. This is how the measures that follow should be appreciated.

99) Related to the above, internally within the SACP it is important to take note of what the Party Constitution says:

Members active in fraternal organisations or in any sector of the mass movement have a duty to set an example of loyalty, hard work and zeal in the performance of their duties and shall be bound by the discipline and decisions of such organisations and movement. They shall not create or participate in SACP caucuses within such organisations and movements designed to influence either elections or policies. The advocacy of SACP policy on any question relating to the internal affairs of any such organisations or movements shall be by open public statements or at joint meetings between representatives of the SACP and such organisations or movements.

100) It follows that the Party prohibits entryist methods of work in fraternal organisations. Over and above that, the Party Constitution prohibits the confinement of the advocacy of its perspectives only to engagements at joint meetings between its representatives and those of its alliance partners. It makes it very clear that the advocacy

of SACP perspectives should involve open public statements, and require activism in the form of practical action in class struggle. In summary, the SACP Constitution best succinctly captures the founding principle of true Kotanism:

In applying the general principles of Marxism-Leninism, the SACP is, in the first place, concerned with their indigenous elaboration and application to the concrete realities of our own developing situation. (Emphasis added)

101) There are several pillars that we should consider, in addition to what has already been presented in the preceding text:

101.1) First and foremost, while the national level should be regarded as the centre – and WHICH MUST HOLD, the Alliance must be viewed in its totality as a single whole. What should happen at the national level with regard to the reconfiguration process, and as its desired outcomes, should also happen across all levels down without exception.

101.2) In a democratic context of an Alliance and given the number of challenges still inhibiting the fruition of the NDR, state power is too important to be left in the hands of one Alliance partner alone – and it does not matter which one it is. Therefore the principle of collective leadership of the NDR, in addition to the principle of democratic consensus seeking consultation, must find profound expression and thorough articulation in the nature, character and functioning of a reconfigured Alliance in relation to state power and related governance process.

101.3) A reconfigured Alliance must however not function as an end on its own. It must, on the contrary, serve as a revolutionary democratic vehicle to give practical effect to a deepening realisation of the *Freedom Charter's* clarion call – 'The people shall govern'. It is in this context that all references to state power and governance made in this proposed way forward, vis-à-vis a reconfigured Alliance, must be understood.

101.4) A reconfigured Alliance must be seen not only in theory, but also in practice acting as the strategic political centre of the NDR in relation at least to the struggle to win the

battle of democracy, state power and the process of governance associated with it. State power as well as related governance has indeed become a new pillar of our struggle, of our programme of radical societal transformation post-1994.

- 101.5) A reconfigured Alliance should therefore function as the core organisational motive force of the NDR. It must accordingly command democratic authority and have a practical effect at sub-national levels, down to the grassroots.
- 101.6) The principles of democratic consensus seeking consultation and collective leadership of the NDR should give practical effect to the continuous development of the minimum programme of the Alliance, to its five-year democratic articulations, and to its implementation through state power and therefore governance. A tighter political regulation of the process, as opposed to the informal, ad hoc or loosely structured interactions that have hitherto prevailed, must be developed and deepened.
- 101.7) The convening of the organs of collective leadership, the Alliance Secretariat, the Alliance Political Council and the Alliance National Summit, must be regularised, strengthened and deepened. The Political Council must be seen playing its leading role. Bilateral and multilateral sessions between senior officials of the leading organs of Alliance components must be rigorously promoted.
- 101.8) The resolutions and decisions adopted by the highest decision making bodies of Alliance components should be consolidated through engagements, in accordance with the principle of consensus seeking consultation, into a common Alliance programme. An Alliance collective mandate is important particularly in relation to state power and its associated process of governance. There must be consistent implementation and progress reviews jointly undertaken. Related to this, an Alliance deployment, evaluation and accountability mechanism must be concretised and deepened.

- 101.9) Following our first democratic general election in 1994, we established a Government of National Unity. This included the remnants of the apartheid regime and its collaborators, as well as other political organisations. The strategic practice of including other political organisations in the executive has since continued. There is therefore no reason in principle why we should not, as a reconfigured Alliance, approach state power, governance and related deployments, policy formulation, evaluation and accountability on the basis of Alliance unity and common programme.
- 101.10) The current situation where all Alliance partners are for example confined to an ANC (only) selection process in regard to election linked deployment and related processes must be reviewed. A reconfigured Alliance must find its profound expression in the design, execution and leadership of the process. If necessary other Alliance partners must have their selection processes and the outcomes must be consolidated through a joint Alliance process.
- 101.11) The ANC and the SACP are two primary political formations within the Alliance. This requires articulation in a reconfigured Alliance. The manner in which the Alliance functions for example in municipal councils and legislative and executive bodies must give practical expression to the articulation and, equally importantly, to the interests and perspectives of the other Alliance partners.
- 101.12) A reconfigured Alliance must be characterised by systematically joint programmes and activism in the everyday struggles of the masses without hampering the independence of its individual components. Arrogance by government leaders and officials must be discarded. The Alliance must work with and learn from the people. It must become the best in responding to, and in articulating the people's progressive and revolutionary demands.
- 101.13) To this end, while the **Freedom Charter** is to the SACP a minimum programme, it remains, to the entire Alliance, the most profound elaboration of the demands of the

people as a whole – the majority of whom is the working class. Greater importance must be attached to its complete implementation as a revolutionary democratic platform of the Alliance. This must be part and parcel of the programmatic pursuit and content of the second radical phase of the NDR.

- 101.14) A reconfigured Alliance must as such be decisively committed, in theory as well as in practice, to developing a leading role in solving the problems that the people find themselves faced with. It must be seen radically developing leadership to reduce class inequality and its articulation in race, gender, uneven development and unequal distribution of resources between urban and rural areas, as well as between developed and underdeveloped areas in urban areas. A reconfigured Alliance must, both in word and in practice, be resolute in radically uplifting the working class out of inequality and poverty, in pushing a programme to develop underdeveloped areas, and in giving practical effect to the right of all to work.
- 101.15) The National Development Plan (NDP), which is often inaccurately said to have been widely accepted, must be reviewed. On the contrary, at its National Alliance Summit held in 2013, the Alliance agreed that, while there were certain areas of agreement, the NDP was not cast in stone and still had to be reviewed. In particular, the SACP and Cosatu did not, and still do not agree with the NDP's economic policy thrust including its labour regime. Concrete steps must be taken to implement its review. In particular a new economic plan which in addition takes into account the changes that have since occurred including within the Alliance is required. This must include a programme to deepen the transformation of our state to become a truly capable national democratic developmental state.
- 101.16) The state should not therefore function in isolation from democratic people's power and the working class as the majority. It is therefore important in our developing post-1994 reality to master the strategy of mass mobilisation in the context of national

democratic revolutionary transformation, the continuous battle of democracy and the exercise of state power. In addition, the mobilisation of the people should not be narrowed to periods of electioneering. It must be consistent and deepened to keep the exercise of state power in check and to ensure that governance processes serve the people.

- 101.17) A reconfigured Alliance must therefore strive, continuously in the daily struggles of the people as well as in governance, to democratically earn the position of societal leadership. The conduct of its leaders and deployees in the state, in positions of responsibility within the Alliance and – yes, in their personal lives, must help win the trust of the people, bring credit to the movement and maximise rather than repel support.
- 101.18) This requires both responsive and proactive measures to deal a heavy blow to corporate capture and other forms of corruption and wrongdoing. A reconfigured Alliance must be seen unquestionably committed to this objective – over and above judicial and other commissions and investigations into the capture. A code of ethics governing the conduct of everybody who is deployed on behalf of the movement must be developed. There must be consequences for violations as part and parcel of accountability mechanisms. This must be linked with a comprehensive cadre development programme.
- 101.19) A reconfigured Alliance must be seen combating regressive tendencies, such as racism, narrow and ethnic nationalism, tribalism, regionalism, the malady of factionalism and other reactionary, counterrevolutionary and counterproductive tendencies, and must make its collective voice reliable and credible. The importance of rigorously pushing the principles of non-racialism and non-sexism cannot be overemphasised in everything a reconfigured Alliance does and handles.

Some implementation steps

- 102) The importance of building programmatic unity of organised workers through forging unity

within Cosatu and labouring everywhere and at all times for a wider trade union unity cannot be overemphasised. To this end the intensification of the struggle against exploitation has a crucial role to play. The same applies to the importance of forging a progressive left popular front and a widest possible patriotic front. All of these should not be seen in isolation from Alliance reconfiguration and the necessity to tilt the balance of class forces in favour of the working class.

103) We need to take into account our assessment of the outcomes of the ANC's 54th National

Conference. However, there can be no doubt that the manner in which the Alliance has been functioning for the most part post-1994 is outdated and that the Alliance has to be reconfigured both organisationally and programmatically. The status quo is just not sustainable.

104) Our Party 14th Congress resolved that engagement with our Alliance partners and other progressive and worker formations in relation to a reconfigured Alliance and a popular left front must take place at all levels. In this regard the Central Committee should and will provide democratic central guidance.



ANNEXURE A

SACP 14th National Congress (2017)

Article 7 The SACP and state and popular power

Believing:

- a) That the issue of state power is a central question of any revolution;
- b) That the state cannot be transformed and that progressive state power cannot be consolidated or defended without active popular and working class power organised both within and outside of the state;
- c) That a central strategic challenge of the current South African revolution is the consolidation of state power and popular power capable of driving a radical second phase of the National Democratic Revolution as the most direct route to socialism in South Africa;
- d) That, while the ANC historically has played an outstanding role as the major vehicle for unifying the key components of a National Democratic movement, the ANC does not own the NDR and its leadership role is one that has to be earned in practice;
- e) That in the current fluid reality the SACP must be guided by:
 - i) Strategic Consistency – not free-floating opportunism or short-termism
 - ii) Analytical Alertness – what Lenin described as the capacity to provide a “concrete analysis of the concrete situation”.
 - iii) Tactical flexibility – the ability not to be caught flat-footed while still being guided by revolutionary strategic consistency.
- f) That Lenin’s observation that a “Victory cannot be won with a vanguard alone” is relevant to our own reality, and that throwing “the vanguard into the decisive battle” before the “entire class, the broad masses” are ready would be a grave mistake.

Noting that:

- a) The important revolutionary advances of the mid-

1990s, the abolition of the institutions of White minority rule, the inauguration of key elements of majority rule via the ballot, and the passing of a progressive Constitution are now threatened with erosion.

- b) The danger of the erosion of our constitutional democracy is a consequence of both the failure to use the democratic bridgehead to advance decisively on a second radical phase of the NDR to transform the structural political economy legacy of colonialism and apartheid, and of a subjective deterioration within much of government and the liberation movement.
- c) This deterioration is epitomised in its most aggressive form by the phenomenon of “private corporate capture of the state”, involving the parasitic looting of public resources.
- d) These realities have, amongst other things, contributed to a declining electoral trajectory for the ANC, which, unless arrested, can lead to the ANC losing its majority party status to an opportunist coalition of opposition forces with further deeply negative consequences for the advance, deepening and defence of the NDR.

Further noting:

- a) That the SACP has a long history of electoral engagement and that, since 1994, the SACP has actively engaged in successive national, provincial and local government elections within the context of the ANC-led Alliance. The SACP has actively contributed to the development of ANC election manifestos, to the list selection processes, and to active electoral campaigning. The SACP has also campaigned for and with the ANC with our own independent Red Brigade cadres, and with our own electoral poster and flyers.
- b) That there is a strong feeling within the SACP that too often the SACP is used by the ANC during election campaigns, only to be marginalised post-elections. While this feeling may be more or less strong in different localities, it is a

widespread and commonly shared view within the ranks of the SACP.

- c) That the 2007 12th National Congress of the SACP resolved that, while “the SACP is not, nor will it become, a narrowly electoralist formation”, “the SACP must contest elections within the context of a re-configured Alliance.” The resolution left open different modalities under which the SACP might contest elections – either on an ANC ticket but within a reconfigured Alliance, or, in the context of a re-configured Alliance, under the banner of the SACP but with a view to post-election coalitions with the ANC.
- d) That the 13th National Congress in 2012 reaffirmed these resolutions.
- e) That initial but uneven progress after 2007 in driving forward a re-configured Alliance has now stalled, and in many respects has broken down. That even the earlier progress in re-configuring a more effective Alliance was never implemented in many sub-national levels.
- f) The capacity of the ANC in particular to lead a process of self-renewal and regeneration, and therefore to effectively play a unifying role in a re-configured Alliance remains uncertain.
- g) That, once more, the SACP has played an active and sometimes leading role in the recent period in building patriotic and united fronts in the struggle against state capture and rampant corruption, for instance.

Therefore Resolve:

- a) That the SACP must actively contest elections.
- b) That the modality through which we contest elections may, or may not be, within the umbrella of a re-configured Alliance
- c) That, in principle, we remain firmly committed to a revolutionary national democratic Alliance, and a re-configured Alliance that re-affirms, in policy as well as in practice, the ANC’s own 2007 National Conference resolution that “The Alliance is the strategic political centre” (and not the ANC on its own).
- d) That the SACP has a leadership role in the struggle to build a re-configured Alliance, while recognising that we cannot place all of our

hopes and expectations solely on a favourable outcome in this regard;

- e) That both for electoral purposes and for defending, deepening and advancing a radical second phase of the NDR, the SACP must play an active and leadership role in the consolidation of a left popular front of working class and progressive forces.
- f) That to take all of this work forward, the 14th Congress mandates the Central Committee to establish a Road Map that must be adopted, with clear, indicative time-lines, by the forthcoming Augmented CC. This Road Map must include the following elements:
 - i) A programme of active engagements with our Alliance partners, and with a wide range of working class and progressive forces to share and to test the SACP’s perspectives. Particular, but not exclusive, attention must be paid to Cosatu and its affiliates. These engagements must be at all levels, national, provincial and local.
 - ii) Based on these engagements, the SACP must play a leading role in developing a common platform for a Left Popular Front of working class and progressive forces
 - iii) Linked to the SACP’s organisational renewal review process, conduct a thorough and ongoing audit of the SACP’s organisational capacity, involving a scientific, factbased evaluation of the strength and influence of our formations, including of our VD-based branches. Regular reports must be tabled in each Central Committee and lower structures must be continuously briefed on progress.
 - iv) The Special National Congress of the SACP must receive a comprehensive report on the Road Map process and resolve on the way forward.

ANNEXURE B

SACP 13th National Congress (2012) RESOLUTION ON THE SACP AND STATE POWER

Noting

- 1) The 12th National Congress in 2007, the National Policy Conference of 2008 Resolutions, and the 2nd Special Congress in 2009, all extensively discussed the issue of the SACP and state power;
- 2) A Central Committee Commission on state power and the reconfiguration of the Alliance, was to be established to outline strategic options for the Party in regard to these matters;
- 3) A report on the options was to be presented to the 13th National Congress;
- 4) Although the Political Report to the 13th National Congress outlined aspects of the SACP's engagement with state power, and the possibilities and options for engaging on the issue of the reconfiguration of the Alliance, Congress was not satisfied that the mandate for the CC Commission had been adequately fulfilled ;
- 5) The party has many cadres in the state at different levels;
- 6) Deployed SACP cadres in the state and legislatures are, in the first instance, under the collective discipline of our allied formation, the ANC;
- 7) This does not mean that deployed SACP comrades should diverge from the programmatic principles of the SACP;

- 8) The party resolved to conscientise and support deployed cadres to uphold high moral and ethical standards;

Therefore Resolve:

- 1) To reaffirm the general thrust of the 12th National Congress resolutions on the party and state power, and on the reconfiguration of the Alliance;
- 2) That the incoming central committee must table a report to the December Augmented Central Committee to guide fuller discussion;
- 3) To reaffirm the party's general strategic approach to electoral politics – including that:
 - a) The SACP is not, and will never become, a narrow electoralist formation;
 - b) Our approach to elections is guided in this phase of the struggle by our overall commitment to advancing, deepening and defending the national democratic revolution – the South African road to socialism; and
 - c) Our strategic objective in regard to state power is to secure not party political but working class hegemony over the state.
- 4) To build the policy capacity of the party to assist the deployed cadres on research capabilities;
- 5) Strengthen our VD based branches as a form of enhancing the party's influence on the working class and the poor.

ANNEXURE C

SACP 12th National Congress (2007)

COMPOSITE RESOLUTION ON THE SACP AND STATE POWER

Noting

- 1) That the question of state power is the central question of any revolution
- 2) That state power is located in diverse sites, including the executive, the legislatures, the judiciary, security forces, the broad public sector, state owned enterprises, and other public institutions.
- 3) That the strategic Medium Term Vision (MTV) of the South African Communist Party is to secure working class hegemony in the State in its diversity and in all other sites of power.
- 4) That electoral politics are an important but not an exclusive terrain for the contesting of state power.
- 5) Working class power in the state is related to working class power in all other sites, including the imperative of developing organs of popular power, active forms of participatory democracy and social mobilisation.
- 6) That the structures of the SACP and our cadres have confronted many problems with the way in which the Alliance has often functioned, particularly with regard to policy making, the lack of joint programmes on the ground, deployments and electoral list processes.

And believing that

- 1) While the state of white minority rule has been abolished and important constitutional and other gains have been won, the post-1994 state requires significant transformation.
- 2) This includes amongst other things:
 - a) Redressing the damaging impact of privatisation and restructuring policies that have weakened the capacity of the state and exposed key strategic areas to the dominance of private capital;

- b) Addressing the lack of a clear cadre development policy in the state;
 - c) Building the strategic capacity of the state to drive developmental programmes;
 - d) Rebuilding critical sectors of the public service, including health care and education, that are still reeling from the effects of years of down-sizing and other restructuring measures;
 - e) Transforming the key area of local government, often the weakest sphere of governance.
- 3) That SACP cadres who are deployed as ANC elected representatives, or as public servants must continue to owe allegiance to the Party and cannot conduct themselves in ways that are contrary to the fundamental policies, principles and values of the SACP. The same principle applies to SACP cadres in other deployments, including within the trade union movement, community organisations, etc.

And further believing that

- 1) The alliance requires major reconfiguration if the NDR is to be advanced, deepened and defended, and if we are to achieve the SACP's medium term vision objectives of building working class hegemony in all sites of power, including the state;
- 2) That this reconfiguration of the Alliance must include the following elements:
 - a) The Alliance must establish itself as a strategic political centre;
 - b) This political centre must develop a common capacity to drive strategy, broad policy, campaigns, deployment and accountability.
- 3) At the same time, this reconfiguration of the Alliance must respect the independent role and strategic tasks of each of the alliance partners.

Therefore resolve

- 1) That the SACP deepens its capacity to provide strategic leadership in regard to key policy sites of state power, including industrial policy, social policies and the safety, security and defence sectors.
- 2) That the SACP contests state power in elections in the context of a reconfigured Alliance.
- 3) To mandate the incoming CC to actively pursue the different potential modalities of future SACP electoral campaigning. These modalities could involve either:
 - An electoral pact with our Alliance partners, which could include agreement on deployments, possible quotas, the accountability of elected representatives including accountability of SACP cadres to the Party, the election manifesto, and the importance of an independent face and role for the SACP and its cadres within legislatures.

OR

- Independent electoral lists on the voter's roll with the possible objective of constituting a coalition Alliance agreement post elections.
- 4) The SACP must actively engage its Alliance partners on these proposals.
 - 5) The Party and State Power Commission must take forward its work to study international experiences closely, and to analyse in detail and evaluate our local reality.
 - 6) The incoming CC must convene a policy conference within a year, in order to assess the feasibility, and potential advantages and disadvantages of the different modalities noted above, including further detailed research.
 - 7) Whatever options are chosen, we must strengthen the SACP's policy capacity, and our organised strength on the ground.

...in the current fluid reality the SACP must be guided by:

- i) Strategic Consistency – not free-floating opportunism or short-termism;
- ii) Analytical Alertness – what Lenin described as the capacity to provide a “concrete analysis of the concrete situation”;
- iii) Tactical flexibility – the ability not to be caught flat-footed while still being guided by revolutionary strategic consistency.

– SACP 14th National Congress, July 2017

Issued by the SACP



110 Cnr Jorissen and Simmond Street
Moses Kotane Floor, COSATU House, Braamfontein 2001
Tel: 011 339 3621/2 Fax 011 339 4244
e-mail: info@sacp.org.za