



# Caucus NEWSLETTER

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## EXTRACT FROM THE SPEECH FROM MINISTER GNM PANDOR, MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION PEACE AND STABILITY CLUSTER MINI-PLenary DEBATE 4 MAY 2023

By Cde Naledi Pandor (MP)  
Minister (International Relation)

I have been asked to speak today about the commitment of the African Union to Silence the Guns and Achieve a Prosperous Africa, and the commitment of the ANC government to resolve conflicts on the continent. As we celebrate the African Union at 60, there are many achievements to be proud of. Not only has the continent developed its own roadmap to peace and stability, but it has made great strides in advancing intra-African trade through the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, developing industrial hubs, and infrastructure networks that will facilitate trade. The leaders of this continent have taken Africa's destiny into their hands and shown determination and fortitude to ensure that Africa will enjoy prosperity and peace. Implicit in Africa's Agenda 2063 was the recognition that violent conflict remains one of the foremost impediments to sustainable development. In line with this, the 2013 AU summit saw African leaders commit to an ambitious objective: to free the African continent of wars, civil conflicts, humanitarian crises, human rights violations, gender-based violence, and genocide within seven years. This project, dubbed 'Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020,' was to form a key pillar of Agenda 2063. While the Silencing of the Guns was not achieved by 2020, the implementation of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa has now been extended to 2030.



While lasting peace has proved elusive in many areas of the continent, the AU has achieved notable successes in conflict resolution. A number of peace deals have been signed in protracted conflicts, paving the way for development and reconstruction.

The AU has also made great strides since 2013 in developing its own Peace and Security Architecture in line with the Lusaka Roadmap. For instance, in June 2016 the AU's Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security declared that the African Standby Force (ASF) had reached full operational capability. Where AU peace operations may take months to deploy, the ASF is designed to provide the AU with the capability to respond within weeks to emerging humanitarian or conflict crises. The extension of the implementation of the plan to Silence the Guns in Africa to 2030

provides an important opportunity for the UN, AU and regional/sub-regional organisations to strengthen their collaboration.

Despite these notable successes, a number of simmering conflicts across the continent continue. They have become ever more complex, expanding across multiple national borders and drawing in a wide array of local, regional, and international actors – including transnational Islamist militant organisations. For example, there is the resurgent threat from Al Shabaab in Somalia and little indication that the Somali security forces are prepared to assume responsibility from AMISOM.

The AU is also facing notable challenges in that it continues to face severe financial constraints and remains perpetually underfunded. The continental body is dependent on external donors, including the UN and EU, to make up shortfalls. The implications for African peace and security are profound, where dependency on unpredictable external sources of financing has repeatedly jeopardised the AU's ability to sustain its operations. Moreover, a fundamental step in "silencing the guns" is to reduce the number of guns present in the first place. Of particular concern is the





# “SILENCING THE GUNS TO ACHIEVE A PROSPEROUS AFRICA”



## By Cde Naledi Pandor: International Relations Minister

the vast number of illicit small arms and light weapons on the continent, which remain the primary instrument of violence employed by non-state armed groups in Africa

Another challenge is the role of external parties in exacerbating insecurity in Africa. In many of Africa’s fragile states, the activities of foreign actors have undermined regional efforts to curb violence and have contributed to political and social divisions. A case in point is Libya, where since the start of 2019 a civil conflict between two rival governments has rapidly spiraled into a destructive proxy war. Despite a UN arms embargo, foreign states have been implicated in the channeling of arms and ammunition to both sides, undermining prospects for a peaceful resolution and contributing to a growing humanitarian crisis. Moreover, the AU has been effectively side-lined in diplomatic efforts to solve the crisis, which have largely been managed from outside the African continent.



Cde Mncedisi Nontsele

While a myriad of peace and security challenges exist, there are also a number of opportunities for the AU to work on in its attempts to silence the guns. One is the implementation of counterterrorism initiatives – the AU has called for the development of a special unit for countering terrorism within the African Standby Force, and the UN has committed to assisting member states’ counterterrorism measures.

The AU also has an important role to play to ensure the improved participation of women and youth in the peace and security agenda. South Africa continues to play a leadership role in advancing the Women Peace and Security Agenda globally in collaboration with a number of partner countries. This has led to a network of women conflict mediators being groomed for deployment into conflict zones.

We prefer to see the glass as half full, as the accomplishments of the AU at 60 are tremendous given the challenges we have emerged from. While there is much work to be done, we would like to take this moment to celebrate our achievements and the sense of hope emerging in Africa for a true renaissance as a youthful continent rises.

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# SIXTY YEARS OF AN UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO THE LIBERATION OF AFRICA AND ITS ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

*By Comrade Malebo Modise-Mpya.*

I dedicate my input in this debate to the memory and legacy of one of the founders of the African National Congress Dr. Pixley ka Isaka Seme who later became the president of the ANC. President Seme is among those who laid the foundation for the rebirth of Africa. Delivering his seminal speech in 1906 titled 'The Regeneration of Africa' at Columbia University in the United States, President Seme said:

The brighter day is rising upon Africa. Already I seem to see her chains dissolved, her desert plains red with harvest, her Abyssinia and her Zululand the seats of science and religion, reflecting the glory of the rising sun from the spires of their churches and universities. Her Congo and her Gambia whitened with commerce, her crowded cities sending forth the hum of business, and all her sons employed in advancing the victories of peace-greater and more abiding than the spoils of war.

The ANC and the government of South Africa have continued with President Seme's ideals and greatly contributed to the African Renaissance. We are participating in this debate to commemorate and celebrate the sixty years of the existence of the African Union, the AU.

In 1963, the people of Africa gathered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to form a united pact to fight for the liberation of the African people.

The leaders of our people then, saw it fit that the fight for the liberation of the African people cannot be fought in silos, and therefore the birth of the then Organisation of African Unity, the OAU, cemented the collective offence against the tyranny of colonialism and apartheid.

During that historical gathering of the African people in Ethiopia, Emperor Haile Selassie defined the historic moment in the following words:

*That this is indeed a momentous and historic day for Africa and for all Africans. We stand today on the stage of world affairs before the audience of world opinion. We have come together to assert our role in the direction of world affairs and to discharge our duty to the great continent ...*

*For his part, the then President of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah outlined the objectives and the responsibilities of the liberated states at the time and for the African people:*

*A whole continent has imposed a mandate upon us to lay the foundation of our Union at this Conference. It is our responsibility to execute this mandate by creating here and now the formula upon which the requisite superstructure may be erected.*



We are inspired by the heroism and the sacrifices of the African people for the total liberation of Africa. The OAU provided material and fraternal support to the liberation movements fighting for freedom in their respective countries. As the ANC, we too, enjoyed the support of the African people in our quest for freedom, and so is SWAPO, ZANU and ZAPU and many liberation movements on the continent.

We are disturbed by the recent conflict in the Sudan which is forcing many people to evacuate. We stand on the side of our government that the people of Sudan should move from the logic of war to the logic of peace. There is an urgent need for the warring factions in Sudan to cease fire and return to the negotiation table to address their challenges.

The people of Sudan deserve peace!

As we celebrate Africa and Africa Day, we should continue to pledge solidarity with the people of Palestine. Africa cannot be free until the people of Palestine are free!

Once again, let's commemorate and celebrate the advancement of the African people by observing Africa Month and Africa Day.



# EXTRACTS OF THE SPEECH OF COMRADE COMRADE T. MMUTLE ON THE OCCASION OF THE AFRICA DAY DEBATE AT THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA ON THURSDAY 25TH MAY 2023.

*By Comrade Thabo Mmutle*

This debate is taking place in the month of May which is Africa Month. On the 25th of May 1963 in Addis Ababa, the Organisation of African Unity now the African Union was formed to rid the continent of the remaining vestiges of colonisation and imperialism, to promote unity and solidarity amongst African States and to coordinate and intensify cooperation for the development of our continent.

We commemorate the founding of a uniting African organisation whose aim was to unite African people beyond our colonial borders and work together towards a common vision of building a better Africa for ourselves. Years later, as the African Union continues to evolve to serve the people of our continent better, As conflict has a negative impact on the socio-economic development of the continent. It disrupts education, it disrupts health provision and sustainable livelihoods, the displacement caused by conflict results in loss of shelter, and women, girls and children are the most vulnerable in conflict. Conflict does not breed progress and we should continue to focus on peaceful resolution.

We have done well in our role as the outgoing chairperson of the African Union where we advanced the African agenda by encouraging the building of unity, inclusive economic development, and shared growth for the people of Africa.



Even as we have exited the chairpersonship of the AU, the good work we have been doing in playing a leading uniting role on the continent must continue. This is in line with our foreign policy.

We must also continue to do work in SADC and deepen regional integration and development. The relevant departments must continue championing the work of the South African government in strengthening our ties with other African countries especially in our region. Countries that are still in conflict should be encouraged to resolve their conflicts peacefully through dialogue, negotiation, and cooperation rather than war and violence. This is in line with the promotion of the AU resolution on silencing the guns on the continent (Agenda 2063).

We must also offer humanitarian support to countries that are in conflict such as ESwatini, Sudan and Western Sahara. This must remind us that our nation cannot prosper if our neighbours have conflict, this reality weighs heavily on our economy because of the social and economic ties that we have with neighbouring countries. South Africa must maintain her robust stance on foreign policy ideals.

We are the offspring of a nation that was once riven by conflict, and we must be the guardians of our Freedom Charter, which declares that There Must Be Peace and Friendship. Peace and Friendship include the free movement of Africans on the Continent. The vision of Agenda 2063 for the free movement of the people in the continent requires harmonisation and it is a vision we should continuously develop systems to attain it. This requires guns to be silenced, it requires us to harmonise legislation and regulations. All African nations should be able to harness the capabilities of Africa's human capabilities.

Guns must be silenced for continued growth, prosperity, and peace on the continent. In all this work being done, women, youth, and children must not be left behind. The Africa we want and aspire to build is one that is inclusive and sustainable to take its entire people forward. And we must recommit ourselves as South Africa to play our part and contribute to building a better Africa and World inclusive of peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction and development.



# EXTRACTS FROM THE SPEECH OF COMRADE ZMD MANDELA ON THE OCCASION OF THE AFRICA DAY DEBATE AT THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA ON THURSDAY 25TH MAY 2023.

*By Comrade Mandla Mandela*

Today, as we optimistically celebrate the 60th Anniversary, we are reminded of the great sacrifices that our courageous forefathers have made in the fight against racism, colonialism and imperialism. We salute them for having laid the foundation for the unity of all Africans at home, and in the diaspora. The legacy of colonialism in Africa goes beyond its divisive impact, leaving behind extensive destruction and entrenching divisions such as national boundaries, linguistic divisions between Francophone and Anglophone countries, and exacerbating tribal conflicts. These persistent consequences continue to fuel civil unrest and political instability, perpetuating the cycle of regime change.

Consider the contentious matter of how the narrative of South African history is presented. Frequently, we encounter a rendition of South African history commencing in 1652 with the arrival of Jan Van Riebeeck, and a claim once made by Helen Zille that colonialism brought the benefits of civilisation to Africa. As some find it convenient to defend injustices around the world, we on our part remember a declaration made by delegates at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, 2001 that 'recognises that colonialism has led to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and that Africans and people of

Asian descent and indigenous peoples were victims of colonialism and continue to be victims of its consequences.

We know that settler colonialists encountered the Khoi and San at the Cape, with the Urill'ael'ona Goringhaikona defeating Portuguese General Francisco de Almeida in 1510. The Goringhaikona suffered devastating consequences, including genocide, due to smallpox. Conflicts labelled "frontier wars" by colonisers but "wars of dispossession" by indigenous people took place from 1774-1879, led by Khoi, Xhosa, and Korana leaders, resulting in political prisoners being sent to Robben Island

Furthermore, the depth and significance of our connections with the African continent, coupled with our shared experience of colonialism and rich pre-colonial history, serve as the foundation for recognizing and promoting Africa's diversity, thereby strengthening African Unity. This forms the philosophical basis of the ANC's commitment to advancing progressive African Nationalism.

And because of the brutal murder of Africans as a result of colonialism and apartheid, Western civilisation did not encapsulate the idea that genuine progress and advancement of society occur when moral principles, ethics and respectful dialogue prevail over coercion, violence and oppression. And clearly it did not imply that a



cl a civilised society is one that values empathy, understanding and cooperation, seeking conflict resolution through peaceful means rather than resorting to force and domination.

Moreover, the actions of those who aimed to dominate Africans failed to emphasise the significance of advancing justice, equality, and human rights and fostering inclusive and respectful dialogue. Instead, their approach prioritised power and violence over diplomacy and mutual understanding.

In conclusion, the OAU has contributed to the liberation of South Africa and it is for this reason that South Africa has contributed immensely to peacekeeping missions on the African continent and most importantly to the development of the AU Agenda 2063 in building the Africa We Want. Our country is a permanent host of the Pan African Parliament and this is an important institution that is aimed at developing continental policies and legislations. It is worth emphasising that the African block participated in the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement, and it is totally not acceptable for great powers to seek through coercion and other means, for Africans to abandon this principled stance. We wish to remind great powers that Africa should not be balkanised into smaller and weaker states. The unity that should define our positive progressive and common strife for the betterment of the lives of all Africans.



# EXTRACTS FROM THE SPEECH OF COMRADE V SIWELA ON THE OCCASION OF THE AFRICA DAY DEBATE AT THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA ON THURSDAY 25TH MAY 2023.

*By Comrade Violet Siwela*

## ACCELERATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA, ITS RISKS AND INTENDED IMPACT

Africa is endowed with precious metals and mineral resources which are critical for economic development. Our continent has been exploited for these mineral resources. Our continent has wildlife which continues to be the marvel of the world. Our land is fertile making our continent a food basket. Our oceans are rich in marine life and various mineral resources. Our continent is a blessed continent which has not fully benefited its people. It is this natural resource that continues to make Africa a contested terrain by various global economic powers. The African Continent has been exploited by colonial countries for centuries, and its trade continues to be skewed to the economies of nations that colonised various African nations. Accelerating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area is a critical instrument to realise the objective of Agenda 2063. As part of the African Renaissance, we need to be able to attract our human capacity to be based in the domestic economy and be global citizens whilst located on the continent. This is critical to impart knowledge to younger generations



and to contribute to the socio-economic development of the continent. As part of shifting the global balance of forces towards a multipolar world, Eastern Countries such as China and India have increased their trade and investment in the African Continent.

The African continent will have the largest youth population in the next half a century. "About 60 per cent of Africa's population is currently below 25 years, and given relatively high fertility rates compared to other regions, the population under 25 is expected to keep rising for the coming decades from 721 million in 2015 to 1.4 billion by 2063" (The US Population Fund). This is a significant advantage to advance development. Without sufficient economic development, the youth dividend can also create various social challenges.

The African Continental Free Trade Area is a critical milestone, though it is yet to be operationalised.

Harmonisation of laws and regulations across the continent is critical for the equitable implementation of the free trade area. As a continent, we need to have a continental infrastructure plan to connect our economies and ease travel across the continent.

We owe the realisation of the African Continental Free Trade Area to our African leaders who have pioneered a vision of a united Africa. An Africa with an integrated economy and the free movement of its people.

Africa is no longer a dark continent but a continent of light.

## ACCELERATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA, ITS RISKS AND INTENDED IMPACT



# PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA ON AFRICA'S PROPOSAL FOR A PATH TO PEACE

President Ramaphosa on Sunday, 18 June 2023, concluded a two-day working visit to Ukraine and the Russian Federation where African leaders proposed a path for peace to the 16-month-long conflict between the two countries. The proposal presented by African leaders on a mission to Ukraine and Russia has created a foundation for future engagements that will contribute to a road to peace and resolution to the devastating conflict.



The African Heads of State and Government asserted several key elements that are vital in starting a path to peace. Some of the elements include the de-escalation of the conflict; release of the prisoners of war and children, adherence to the principle of the UN Charter on Sovereignty; ensuring that there is humanitarian support for those in need and post-war reconstruction amongst others.

As South Africa we have consistently maintained our non-aligned stance, our respect for the UN Charter and for the peaceful resolution of conflict through dialogue. From the beginning of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, our position has been that this conflict needs to be resolved through negotiation. South Africa is pleased to participate in this mission by six African countries to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict. As a country, we will continue to maintain an independent foreign policy and will use our presence in international forums to promote dialogue and the peaceful resolution of conflict.



African-led peace support operations have demonstrated their capability to understand the context and dynamics of conflicts not only in Africa but across the globe. Sustainable peace requires context-specific peacebuilding, as each conflict has its own distinguishing features. Marking 60 years since the signing of the charter of the Organisation of African Unity, the significant progress in mainstreaming and implementing international human rights law, international humanitarian law, conduct and discipline standards within mission planning, have been facilitated through the tripartite partnership between the African Union, European Union and the United Nations. This has clearly underlined the African Union's conviction that its peace operations will serve as a global good for the preservation of peace and security. Thus this peace mission to Ukraine and Russia solidifies our belief that peace is a shared endeavour.



# SIGN LANGUAGE SET TO BECOME THE 12TH OFFICIAL LANGUAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

*Member of Parliament Comrade Wilma Newhoudt-Druchen who uses sign language*

Parliament has passed a law that will make sign language the 12th official language in the country. Members of the National Assembly passed the bill after a year-long process in the legislature.

The Bill has been sent to President Cyril Ramaphosa to sign it into law. From 1994 South Africa has had 11 official languages. But last year the Department of Justice and Correctional Services tabled the sign language bill for approval by members of the national legislature.

The justice committee had said there was reference to the use of sign language in various pieces of legislation. Parliament said on Wednesday the Bill had undergone a rigorous process including public hearings over the last few months.

“Primarily, the amendment seeks to advance the cultural acceptance of SASL (South African Sign Language), the deaf culture; ensure the realisation of the rights of persons who are deaf and hard of hearing to equal protection and benefit of the law and human dignity; and to promote inclusive and substantive equality and prevent or eliminate unfair discrimination on the ground of disability, as guaranteed by section 9 of the Constitution,” said parliament.

It said the adoption of the bill by the National Assembly was the recognition of the rights of people who are deaf in the country. This includes those who are hard of hearing.

“Adoption of the Bill could impact the scope and purpose of the reference to sign language in such legislation. Relevant departments administering those and related legislation should take note of this constitutional amendment recognising SASL as an official language in terms of section 6 of the Constitution and consider whether the adoption of the Bill may require consequential amendment to associated legislation for purposes of clarifying the status of SASL as expressed in the Constitution.

Wilma Newhoudt-Druchen is a member of Parliament who uses sign language and she is deaf. She has been an African National Congress (ANC) member of the National Assembly since 1999 but had a two-year break between 2014 and 2016. She has been a member of the Communications Committee and also sits on the Justice and Correctional Services Committee.

Newhoudt-Druchen is elated



that the National Assembly recently passed the Constitution 18th Amendment Bill with more than 300 votes. Newhoudt-Druchen says, “We actually just needed 267, two-thirds and we passed it with such a huge number and I would like to thank all political parties who supported us unanimously to pass the bill. You know the deaf community march in 2006 in all of the provinces. I would like to thank all the people who were involved in the march. Pansalb has given us support, the Department of Arts and Culture has given us support, and the Department of Basic Education has already implemented. So there are many role players, not just outside parliament. So we really want to thank them all for that.”



