

ZIMBABWE COMMUNIST PARTY

Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. V.I. Lenin

MESSAGE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY ON ITS CENTENARY

Makorokoto! Amhlope! To our Comrades of the SACP on their 100th birthday

Comrades in the struggle,

28th July 2021

The South African Communist Party has been an inspiration to the Zimbabwe Communist Party. More than that, without the assistance of the SACP it is doubtful if we would have a ZCP without your support. Our links, however, go back well before the Founding Conference of the ZCP on 28th April 2017. The borders in Africa were not created in Africa but by the imperialist powers sitting in Berlin in 1885. Almost all ethnic groups in South Africa are also there in Zimbabwe and in many cases there are direct family ties.

In terms of the liberation struggle, our ZAPU forces (the name ZPRA had yet been adopted) learned toi-toi in Algeria and then passed it on to MK in the camps in Zambia. ZAPU/MK then launched the Wankie and Sipholilo Campaigns. We remember in particular the role played by Comrade Chris Hanu and the supreme sacrifice made by Comrade Basil February and others on the soil of Zimbabwe.

We remember too that founders of our liberation movement, in particular, Comrades Benjamin Burombo, Joshua Nkomo and Josiah Chinamano learnt their militant ideology in South Africa and that Chinamano brought back with him a South African wife, Comrade Ruth Chinamano who was to become one of the most fiery revolutionary women in Zimbabwe.

We want to remember those pioneers who formed the CPSA in 1921, first and foremost the brilliant but short-lived David Ivon Jones, then the first General Secretary of the CPSA, Comrade Bill Andrews, then we must remember the indefatigable S.P. Bunting who fought hard for the almost exclusively white party to concentrate on recruitment of the African majority.

In this respect we remember with honour Comrade T.W. Thibedi, the first and only African member of the CPSA at its formation and founder of the Industrial Workers of Africa, the first African trade union in South Africa.

Neither do we forget that it was the CPSA which was first, in 1929 and in the language of the day, to call for a 'Native Republic'. We must accept that at this time, the ANC was not a liberation movement and had no intention of leaving the British Empire or even of pushing for a black majority government. In this regard we recognise with great honour Comrade James La Guma, a member of the CPSA, who was also the first nationalist in South Africa. It was La Guma who from 1927 pushed the line of the Native Republic both to the CPSA and the Comintern which then gave instructions to the CPSA.

Then comes arguably the greatest of all South African Communists, Comrade Moses Kotane, Chief Architect of the Struggle who in 1937 played a major part in reviving the nearly defunct ANC and in 1939 became General Secretary of the CPSA. Kotane led the CPSA out of a period of sectarianism and forged unity with the ANC and it was while he was leading the Party that his close Comrade, J.B. Marks led the 1946 Miner's Strike, the first major strike of Africans.

Also in 1939, Comrade Yusuf Dadoo, President of the South African Indian Congress joined the CPSA and was later to become National Chairperson of the Party at a very crucial period. Dadoo influenced many South African Indians to join the struggle and the Party.

It was Kotane who brilliantly dissolved the CPSA in 1950 at the time of the Suppression of Communism Act only to revive it 3 years later underground as the SACP. Underground the SACP led 4 of the 5 member organisations of the Congress Alliance, the remaining organisation, the ANC being headed by Albert Luthuli whose chief adviser was Kotane. The Freedom Charter itself being drafted by Communists.

We do not forget either that the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe was the work of the SACP and that the training of the first MK in explosives being carried out by Jack Hodgson another Communist.

The role of women Comrades, most notably Cissy Gool, Josie Mpama, Dora Tamana, Ray Alexander, Betty Du Toit must also be remembered.

In sketching the earlier history, we are fully conscious of the well-known later role played by Joe Slovo and Chris Hani and the sidelining of the Party by reactionary forces at the time of the counter-revolution in the USSR.

Today we note that the SACP is gaining ground with its current slogan, "Against State Capture! Against neoliberalism!"

We look forward on working with the SACP as we implement our Programme *Completing the Liberation of Zimbabwe* adopted at our 1st Congress in December 2019. Indeed the liberation of Zimbabwe cannot be completed without the liberation of Swaziland and the defeat of the neoliberal agenda in South Africa which has pushed back the gains made by the governing Alliance in the democratic breakthrough of 1994 and the ending of apartheid.

We further look forward to working together on the rebuilding of the African Left Networking Forum (ALNEF) to spread Communist ideas throughout our continent.

One Africa from Cape to Cairo !!

Workers of All Countries Unite !!

**Ngqabutho Mabhena, General Secretary
on behalf of the ZCP Central Committee**