



“Let's win SA back from the state capturers”

**Discussion document in preparation for the
United Democratic Movement's National General Council
on 28 April 2023 at Gallagher Estate, Gauteng**

by Major General (Ret.) Bantubonke Holomisa

National Office

Telephone: 012-321-0010

Email: bholomisa@udm.org.za

Facebook: [Bantu Holomisa | udm.rsa](#)

Twitter: [@BantuHolomisa](#) | [@UDmRevolution](#)

Website: www.udm.org.za

Contents

1. Introduction	2
1.1. The political context of the birth of UDM: 25 years of fighting the good fight	3
1.2. Vision, mission, and party platform of the UDM	4
1.3. Coalitions in the 2024 elections	6
2. The State of the Nation.....	6
2.1. The ambivalence caused by the Tripartite Alliance	6
2.2. The economy.....	8
2.3. Irresponsible interest rate increases by the South African Reserve Bank	11
2.4. Tax-to-GDP ratio	12
2.5. Illicit Financial Flows	12
2.6. Unemployment, poverty and infrastructure	12
2.7. Land	13
2.8. Government must do more	13
2.9. Eskom, loadshedding and its impact on the economy	14
2.10. State Capture and corruption	15
2.11. The findings of the Zondo Commission	16
2.12. Phala Phala Farm Gate.....	16
2.13. The Covid-19 pandemic	17
2.14. The case of the Public Protector.....	17
2.15. Safety, security and intelligence	18
2.16. July 2021 riots in South Africa:	19
2.17. High levels of crime and incompetent policing	19
2.18. Service delivery and civil disobedience	20
2.19. Gender-based violence	20
2.20. Education	21
2.21. The LGBTQ+ community.....	21
2.22. Illegal immigration	21
2.23. Media	22
2.24. The environment and climate change.....	23
3. Political realignment	24
3.1. Defining the Challenge	25
3.2. Creation of a New Alliance	26
4. State of the Organisation.....	29
4.1. Well informed members ensure robust structures.....	29
4.2. Processes leading up to our national events.....	29
4.3. Implementation is key	29
4.4. Educating UDM members.....	29
4.5. Plastic branches	30
4.6. UDM Associate Structures.....	30
4.6.1. The role of women in the UDM.....	30
4.6.2. The role of youth in the UDM	31
4.6.3. The role of students in the UDM.....	31
5. Closing	31

1. Introduction

This document is intended for discussion by the United Democratic Movement (UDM) structures at all levels, nationally, in preparation for the National General Council on 28 April 2023, which will endorse the final version of the document - a document that will take us to our National Congress in 2024.

Our members and leaders must robustly debate various serious issues, not only those facing South Africa, but those facing the UDM as an organisation. We should approach this debate with open minds and have frank debate regarding the topics on the table to define the UDM's organisational status and its role as a political stakeholder in South Africa.

The debate around this document should result in a draft manifesto for the 2024 National and Provincial Elections. It is therefore important that we address the "how to resolve"-part of the dilemmas and problems described in this document. This will be distilled into a manifesto that can be owned by all our members and structures.

The success of this process solely depends on the quality of our debate and that we be honest about the future of the UDM. We must take stock of the past, review our recent performance, assess our prospects, make the necessary decisions for the benefit of the Party and South Africa, and define our vision for the next 25 years in a practical manner.

Furthermore, the UDM currently has leadership gaps at national executive level, because of persons being indisposed and those who untimely passed away. This in particular affects the offices of the chairperson, deputy-chairperson, organiser and deputy-organisers. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic did much damage to the party's core activities and growth, and its only recently that we have started to recuperate to get back on track. It is incumbent of the National General Council to discuss the way forward and address these leadership issues.

1.1. The political context of the birth of UDM: 25 years of fighting the good fight

The UDM was not founded on individual personalities' sudden whims, triggered by an impulse to dabble in the national politics of South Africa. Its birth was a political response to a historical need to fill a political vacuum that was created by the tremors of a momentous social revolution that had taken place.

The impact of the social forces that transformed a totalitarian racist regime to a democratic social order, founded on the most progressive principles to be enshrined in a bill of rights in any country in modern times, shook the social foundations that had hitherto provided the basis and rationale for the alignment of political groupings which characterised our political landscape prior to 1994.

The tumultuous shift of individual and group attitudes created a magnetic vortex that sucked in people from diverse social, economic, political, racial and ethnic backgrounds, into a melting pot which gave birth to the UDM.

The UDM has, since its founding on 27 September 1997, been consistent in its message of the ethics of good governance and have more often than not been branded counterrevolutionaries for its efforts. Yes, we have lost some of our less staunch leaders and members, most notably during the period of the dastardly floor-crossing legislation. But, through our tireless efforts that legislation is now dead and buried.

Since 1999, the UDM advocated for the changing of the rules of party-political funding. The African National Congress (ANC) and the Democratic Alliance dug in their heels and refused to budge for many-many years. We are now vindicated as parties are forced to declare their donations. We also now know why they were so reluctant to share that information.

The UDM's exposure of alleged corruption at the Public Investment Corporation, the Development Bank of South Africa, the Department of Education and the Ministry of Defence is also well documented.

The correspondence regarding our continued constituency work, where we advocate for communities and individuals, is available on our social media accounts and on the UDM's website at www.udm.org.za.

Never, over the past 25 years, have we relented in exposing corruption and assisting South Africans where we were able to with the resources at our disposal.

1.2. Vision, mission, and party platform of the UDM

Our point of departure in nation building must not be an ideological paradigm predicated on our inclusive intolerant nationalism. This would be an unfortunate repeat of the discredited and failed social orders such as apartheid and communism in the former Eastern Bloc countries. This view has been advocated by the late Dr Van Zyl Slabbert.

Our history demands an awareness and willingness by all South Africans to fight the resurgence of racial hostilities and conflicts. It is in recognition of this historical legacy of our society that the UDM has committed itself to the vision of a new-South Africanism, which recognises and embraces the cultural diversity of our society.

We agree with the view expressed by Van Zyl Slabbert that:

"In a deeply divided society the challenge is to build institutions that could cope with, and mediate, the problems of diversity. Particularly important in this context is an efficient criminal justice system, the quality of education, religious tolerance; an open and accessible economy and generally a competent state administration."

Our concept of the new-South Africanism is based on the **vision** and conviction that the UDM is: *“...the political home of all South Africans, united in the spirit of South Africanism by our common passion for our country, mobilising the creative spirit inherent in our rich diversity towards our transformation into a winning nation”.*

As well as our **mission** to:

“... unite South Africans from all communities in a new political home, built on the foundation of the principles and ideals of our National Constitution. To this end we will address poverty and imbalances in our society, inspired by our unifying love of our Country and its people. We will set free the creative power inherent in our diversity and will co-operate with all stakeholders to ensure a quality life and individual freedom for every citizen, based on good governance and civil order, towards being a Winning Nation.”

Proceeding from this basis our core values, which inspire our policies are:

- *respect for the life, dignity and human worth of every individual;*
- *integrity in public- and private life;*
- *the individual rights and freedoms enshrined in our Country’s Constitution;*
- *tolerance and respect for the rights and freedoms of others;*
- *solidarity in the common spiritual ownership of all that is good in our Country;*
- *national self-discipline based on an acceptance that each right and freedom carries with it a corresponding and equal obligation and responsibility;*
- *national moral regeneration towards a clear distinction between right and wrong, between what is acceptable conduct and what not, between good and evil;*
- *economic policies based on moral values;*
- *freedom of religion and worship.*

In pursuing its vision and mission the UDM encroached on constituencies which had been monopolised by other parties including the ruling party. In the latter case the UDM began to articulate the aspirations of the disadvantaged majority who are increasingly marginalised by the failure of the transformation process and in particular the inability of our economy to narrow the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

We must further anchor our roots and expand our presence in these constituencies and translate into practice our mission to make the UDM the home of every South African.

For more on the UDM’s policy positions, please visit <https://udm.org.za/about/udm-policy-positions/>

The UDM claims our victories. We have been batting on the wicket of anti-corruption and the ethics of good governance, in line with our vision and mission, since our inception. It has only been since the Zondo Commission's findings have been accepted that the UDM has been vindicated and our views popularised. But we must not deceive ourselves in believing the ruling party's self-corrective narrative. The ruling party will surely drag its feet in implementing the Zondo Commission's findings and we can be rest assured that a leopard will not change its spots. The onus to keep on fighting the good fight rests with the opposition and civil society.

1.3. Coalitions in the 2024 elections

Although we will be addressing this topic in detail later in this document, coalitions must be raised as a salient point. There seems to be emerging consensus that there will be no outright winner of the 2024 national and provincial elections. This must not be read as a negative but rather as a positive outcome of a flourishing democracy.

This outcome would promote checks and balances that are needed in South Africa, given the current corruption that we are experiencing due to the current one-party dominance in both national, provincial and local governments spheres.

Of course, the phenomenon of coalition governments in South Africa is not new. The first democratic government post-1994 was indeed an example of coalition government i.e. the Government of National Unity (GNU).

The difference between the GNU and all coalitions thereafter is that it had been regulated, whilst all others had no regulatory mechanism and were therefore managed "loosely".

Therefore, using the GNU example, future coalition governments must be regulated along the lines of the 1993 Constitution. Given the experience gained, as well as learning from other countries where coalition governments flourish, we can agree on a practical, and regulated system of governance.

2. The State of the Nation

2.1. The ambivalence caused by the Tripartite Alliance

In pursuing its vision and mission the UDM encroached on constituencies which had been monopolised by other parties including the ruling party. In the latter case the UDM began to articulate the aspirations of the disadvantaged majority who are increasingly being marginalised by the failure of the transformation process and in particular the inability of our economy to narrow the gap between the haves and have-nots.

We must now anchor our roots and expand our presence in these constituencies and translate into practice our mission to make the UDM the home of every South African.

Our analysis of the changing socio-economic-political order in South Africa formation, and politics in South Africa indicates that there will be discernible political shifts along interest group divides, distinguished by common concerns and aspirations. This process will move towards the crystallisation of two major political streams, which express the ethos of the beneficiaries of the established order, on the one hand, and the aspirations of the emerging major social groupings that are marginalised at present on the other hand. This will necessitate the emergence of two major political formations representing these interest groups. Indications are that the ruling party is already catering for the elite and pursuing economic policies that benefit a few who share a common vision with the elites of the core world economies.

The UDM could well be the focus for an emerging political formation, which will articulate the concerns and aspirations of the vast marginalised people of all colours and races in South Africa, who belong with the periphery, hence our economic policy centres on the need to invest in enterprise development, to alleviate unemployment among others, and narrow the gap between the haves and have-nots.

The levels of poverty are ever increasing and pervading all social and racial communities. The emergence of this major political grouping representing the interest of the marginalised will remove the confusion created by an ambivalent Tripartite Alliance (African National Congress (ANC), Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and South African Communist Party) ruling clique who preach elimination of unemployment in the streets and legislate retrenchments and greater unemployment in Parliament.

The labour movement is encountering threats to their members' job security because of government policies. Continuous retrenchments in the various sectors of the economy result in national strikes by COSATU. It must be remembered that some of COSATU's members are also UDM members, some of whom hold official positions in their unions. The anomaly of COSATU's alliance with the governing party brings the federation into collision with its patrons who hold government positions when it champions the interests of the workers. Very often our UDM members' political credentials are questioned when they refuse to conform to manipulation by the governing alliance. It is for this reason that the UDM has, for years, urged the labour federation to extricate itself from this complex and contradictory political entanglement and to focus its attention on purely labour related issues.

It is imperative that the labour union assumes its traditional independent stance as a trade union and reject government pressures and divisive tactics which seek to discredit some of the labour union members in order to advance its macro-economic policies that leads to jobless growth. It is a fact of life that there is no national support for the several macro-economic policies we have seen over the years, because it has led to joblessness and no economic growth.

There will be a political formation, which is well focussed on improving the quality of life for all South Africans. The current confusion has undermined investor confidence and eroded our currency. The blame that South Africa has been given “junk” status by all the major international ratings agencies can in part be laid at the years’ long policy confusion caused by the ruling party. South Africa has recently been greylisted by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) for failing to adequately tackle illicit financial flows and meet all eleven of the FATF’s effectiveness measures to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

The consequences of the current trends are social instability. In this situation corruption and misrule abound. The revolutionary firebrands of yesteryear have reneged on the struggle days’ promises to redistribute the national resources for the benefit of the disadvantaged. Instead, they have strategically positioned themselves in bogus workers’ empowerment projects for their own benefit without issuing even share certificates, let alone dividends to the workers they purport to empower.

The former champions of workers’ rights are now exploiting their traditional relationship with the workers to enrich themselves. The erstwhile communists have abandoned their socialist programme and boarded the gravy train. The Tripartite Alliance partners seem to have forgotten the original agenda. Their macro-economic policies have not delivered more jobs or more investments, instead billions of Rands are leaving this country daily without any hope that it would ever come back.

2.2. The economy¹

The main contradiction in the South African political economy is the struggle between the backward-looking African nationalism of the ANC, which tries to right past wrongs through which it benefits, and the country’s forward looking private business which operates on the premise that investment made today will yield profit in the future. African nationalists want to be paid now by business for pain suffered in the past while business wants to invest its money now so it can make a profit in the future. In this clash of the elephants, it is the grass, in other words, the ordinary people that suffer.

It is often forgotten that the South African economy was not created by Afrikaner or African nationalists. The South African economy whose backbone remains the exploitation of the country’s vast mineral resources through cheap, largely migrant, black labour was created by the British during the last quarter of the 19th century when they established the country’s vast mining industry.

¹ Based on extracts from “Outlook of South Africa’s political environment and its impact on the economy” by Mr Moeletsisi Mbeki

Since the British relinquished political control of South Africa in 1910, South African governance has been dominated by nationalism, first Afrikaner nationalism which ruled between 1910 and 1994 and now by African nationalism which has ruled South Africa since 1994.

Top of the list for African nationalism in 1994 was the democratisation of the political system. Democratisation of the country's political system was used to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination against Africans, Coloureds, and Indians.

Democratisation created different challenges in the relationship between business and African nationalism. There had been conflicts between business and Afrikaner nationalism, but these were not as threatening since Afrikaner nationalist elite were property owners and therefore had common interests with business. Differences between business and African nationalism were more threatening to business because business felt politically marginalised. Democracy concentrated political power in the hands of the black majority that business itself had been party to exploiting.

Democracy in South Africa far from creating a business environment of certainty and stability, left business feeling exposed to potential asset seizure and onerous taxes by the all-powerful but property-less African nationalist elite that ruled practically with no credible opposition. Before long the fears of business were confirmed by rising corruption among the African governing elite and gross mismanagement especially at local government level and of state-owned enterprises that provided electric power; mismanagement of state-controlled rail and air transport as well as other social and economic infrastructure needed by business to operate such as broadband, public broadcasting and the post office.

Democracy also came at other direct costs to business. The new African nationalist rulers used the state to satisfy pent up black consumption by augmenting the size of public sector employment as well as its remuneration. The size of the public service thus ballooned, its remuneration growing exponentially, overtaking private sector remuneration in many categories.

South Africa is the most unequal country in the world. It has some of the highest unemployment rates in the world. This is the legacy of 110 years of African and Afrikaner elite rule. Why should the regime of inequality and unemployment change if African nationalist rule continues for many more years? The following diagram shows us the structure of the stunted society nationalism built in South Africa. There is nothing like it anywhere else in the world.

A TALE OF TWO NATIONALISMS AND HOW THEY HAVE FAILED SOUTH AFRICA

By Moeletsi Mbeki*

Introduction

My main research over the years was to try to understand the impact on South Africa's economic development of Nationalism which has been the dominant political force in South Africa during the last 110 years since the British handed over power to a South African administration in 1910 at the creation of the Union of South Africa. Since then South Africa has been dominated by two Nationalisms. Afrikaner Nationalism which dominated the country's politics between 1910 and 1994. African Nationalism which has controlled the government for 25 years since 1994. The difference between the two Nationalisms was not that one was white and the other black. The Afrikaner Nationalist elite were a coalition of land owners who produced maize, wheat, fruit, wine, sugar and beef. This elite used the mining industry and the export of mineral resources to fund the state which it used to drive the development and profitability of their private property. The African Nationalist elite are a coalition of black middle-class professionals and traders, organised labour, civil society and faith based organisations and intelligentsia. As this elite did not own land or any other means of production its priority in its control of the state is to live off state revenues through taxing the economy and the wealthy.

Priorities of Afrikaner Nationalist elite

For the Afrikaner Nationalist elite to advance the development and profitability of their private lands and other businesses it used its control of the state to do the following:

- Excluded the majority black population from political power
- Created and maintained cheap labour through repression
- Developed transportation and communication infrastructure
- Developed education and health facilities for training owners and their managers
- Used state revenues to create state owned industries that foreign and domestic capital was not interested in investing in - fertilisers, iron and steel, armaments, power generation, public broadcasting, national airline etc
- Advanced limited industrialisation, driven by protectionism and combatting of sanctions

Priorities of African Nationalist elite

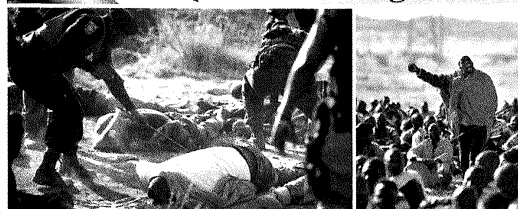
In order to achieve their objective of increasing private consumption of the African middle class and their electoral supporters, the African Nationalist elite used its control of the state to do the following:

- Promoted the democratisation of South Africa
- Eliminated racial discrimination against the black population
- Transformed the public service and strengthen tax collection
- Retained the cheap migrant labour mineral export driven economic system
- Opened the economy to international trade and investment
- Created a welfare state for the poor by transferring resources from production sectors to government and private household consumption
- African Nationalist elite therefore does not have an interest in promoting industrialisation of the economy; this explains why under the rule of the African Nationalist elite even the limited industrialisation achieved under the Afrikaner Nationalist elite is endangered as imports – from chicken pieces to tinned tomatoes - balloon

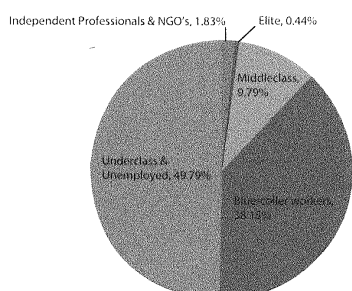
A new charter for consolidated democracy and economic development

For South Africa to break out of this Nationalist Paradigm and industrialise and modernise its society a number of things must happen:

- I. Electoral reforms to introduce mixed constituency and proportional representation at national and provisional levels.
- II. Its education, health care, transport and electric power supply systems must be overhauled and redesigned.
- III. Its public services - including traditional leaders sector - must be reconfigured to serve the people.
- IV. Its economic relations with its SADC and COMESA neighbours must be renegotiated and restructured.
- V. Its trade and investment relations with non-African partners must also be renegotiated.
- VI. The economy must be restructured to be more investment driven rather than consumption and finance driven and Black Economic Empowerment's demands on foreign investors should be phased out.
- VII. Business development plan to grow employment and phase out export of mineral ores.



Social Structure of South Africa - 2014



Source: StatsSa

Social Structure of South Africa Today

Social Group	Main Strengths	Key Weakness	Vulnerability
Business Elite Core Objectives Maximise profits and retain ownership of assets	Own productive assets and control skilled management	Do not control government; dependence on state owned power and transport companies	Asset seizures, onerous taxation, exposed to corruption by political elite; mismanagement of economy
Political Elite Core Objectives Maximise consumption for black middle class and constituency and to retain monopoly of political power	Control state and manage government revenues	Dependence on vote of underclass; do not own productive assets; doubtful management skills	Change of allegiance of underclass, political activism of business elites, opposition from blue collar workers. Capital flight
Blue Collar Workers Formal Sector Core Objectives Expand trade union membership and raise remuneration	Own labour power and control independent trade unions	Threat from large overhang of unemployed	Mismanagement of economy, corruption; loss of influence with government, political intimidation by ruling party agents
Underclass/Unemployed Core Objectives Survive and influence state	Large numbers and voting power	Lack artisan skills; dependence on government welfare	Economic meltdown and political manipulation
Independent Professionals/Non Profit Organisation and New Entrepreneurs Core Objectives Freedom of association and speech and reduce state interference	Command many skills and extensive influence through religion and good works	Fragmented and lack of cohesion; financial dependence on donors	Donor unpredictability; intimidation by government agents; over - cautious banks

Source: Moeletsi Mbeki

The use of the state by South Africa's two elites during the last hundred or so years achieved one very important outcome, it constrained the ability of the economy to develop to its full potential. The insatiable demand for cheap black labour by the Afrikaner elite and their allies and partners in the mining sector, while it enabled a certain amount of economic development to take place especially in agriculture, mining, urban and rural infrastructure, it however hobbled the broader and deeper development of South Africa by constraining the development of the country's human capital. Job reservation and many misguided education policies condemned South Africa to relatively lower skill levels of development such as extractive industries, assembly, construction, public sector administration, and trade.

Most importantly the African elite dis-incentivise entrepreneurship among blacks with policies of black economic empowerment and affirmative action. Not surprisingly there are hardly any new significant companies being created in South Africa.

South Africa today has rightly been described (by the late Prof Sampie Terreblanche) as an enclave economy that primarily services the consumption needs of its relatively small black and white middle class and upper class while a large part of the population is locked into unemployment, underemployment, poverty, and underdevelopment in rural and urban areas due to low investment levels in the economy as a percentage of gross domestic product.

There is therefore no reason to presume that the ANC government would do things differently if it continued to rule for another 27 years or even for 50 years.

2.3. Irresponsible interest rate increases by the South African Reserve Bank

The conflict in Ukraine has caused increases in commodity prices, especially for food and energy. This has compounded inflationary pressures in many countries around the world, including South Africa. Since GDP levels in many parts of the world remain below pre-Covid-19 levels, central banks ought to maintain a balancing act between fighting inflation and supporting growth. Regrettably, the South African Reserve Bank (SARB), through its policy of inflation targeting, chooses the former. It implements inflation targeting very rigidly by increasing the interest rate every time inflation rises or breaches the upper band of its inflation target without paying due regard to whether inflation is imported (as is the case with the rise in commodity prices cited above) or not.

The UDM has always been of the view that there needs to be an alternative to inflation targeting. In addition to maintaining price stability, the central bank should have a socio-economic development mandate, such as employment growth, economic growth, to mention but a few. This is particularly important given the fact the SARB's rigid implementation of inflation targeting tends to cancel out government's countercyclical fiscal policy stance in times of low economic activity, such the post-pandemic era.

2.4. Tax-to-GDP ratio

The World Bank regards tax revenues above 15% of a country's gross domestic product (GDP) as a key element for economic growth and poverty reduction. A country's tax to GDP ratio measures a country's tax revenue relative to the size of the economy. South Africa, with tax to GDP of 25.7% (which is as high as that of Sweden), has extraordinarily high levels of poverty and is the most unequal society in the world due to the ANC government's misrule and rampant corruption. Put plainly, the ANC government taxes South Africans, not to fund their development, but to subsidise the lifestyles of the greedy political ruling elite.

The UDM is of the firm view that by just adhering to principles of good governance, it is possible to ensure value for money for the taxpayers and to ultimately reduce their tax burden to reasonable levels, i.e. 20% - 23% of GDP.

2.5. Illicit Financial Flows

*"In value, illicit financial flows have cost South Africa a lot of money. In its report, Oxfam South Africa reported that between 2010 and 2014, the government potentially lost \$7.4-billion annually (estimated between R51-billion in 2010 and R93-billion in 2015). The Alternative Information and Development Centre reports that export misinvoicing between 2000 and 2014 was estimated at \$385.1-billion (more than R2-trillion). Global Financial Integrity estimated in 2017 that the value of illicit financial flows was 7% to 8% annually (between R200-billion and R400-billion)."*²

The UDM is calling for an Economic Indaba precisely because of some of these pressing national gaps. The matter of Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) should be tabled at this gathering. It is obvious that reducing and finally stamping out IFFs shall allow the country to apply that money constructively elsewhere e.g., infrastructure maintenance and development. It will create a base resource from which billions of Rands can be utilised to address poverty, unemployment and inequality.

2.6. Unemployment, poverty and infrastructure

The nexus of unemployment, poverty and infrastructural decay is causing major socio-economic stress for our people. Lack of job opportunities in the rural areas are still one of the root causes of rapid urbanisation, which places extra pressure on the finite infrastructure.

We inherited a first world infrastructure in 1994 in some parts of the country, which have not been improved upon, instead it has been put under pressure, left to languish and break. The infrastructure in the townships and the former homelands were never developed and brought up to par and the little there had been has not been maintained.

² <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-11-28-imperialist-theft-how-illicit-financial-flows-and-capitalism-trample-human-rights-in-south-africa/> - last accessed on 2023/04/12

It is estimated that more than 64% of South Africans live in urban areas, much due to the hope that people will find jobs in the cities and towns. Once these hopefuls come into touch with the harsh reality, the job market spits them out and they are relegated to languish in townships and informal settlements.

2.7. Land

As we all know, land ownership in South Africa has a painful history, since it played a central role in the racially divisive politics of the past. The majority of our citizens remain landless 29 years into our democracy. The incumbent government's failure to deliver on the issue of land, has had a severe impact on the lives of most South Africans, depriving them economically, culturally and emotionally of opportunities to become active citizens.

When the new South Africa was ushered in, the issue of land was placed on the backburner with political freedom as item number one on the agenda. That said, the land issue, as a tool to achieve economic emancipation should have been tackled much sooner to avoid the emotional tug of war we now witness.

The UDM supported the 18th amendment of the Constitution in that, should 1913 have been used as an initial cut-off date, whilst many indigenous people forcibly lost their land long before then, it would have meant that the entire process was doomed to fail.

The topic of land cannot be postponed any longer. A holistic methodology needs to be agreed upon at a national round table on land where the detail of the economy and land can be agreed upon by all and disposed of once and for all.

2.8. Government must do more

The state must do more. We need a creative state intervention, which recognises that artificially created impediments to social advancement of the disadvantaged majority are removed and a programme of accelerated wealth and land redistribution is implemented without delay. None of the current economic strategies of parastatal privatisation and selective black empowerment can achieve that objective. A transformed economic order will give impetus to other social and educational programmes that are designed to truly integrate our society and create a new democratic South African ethos.

It is too early and immoral for government to throw the fate of South Africans to the performance of the market. We still need a regulated, state-led growth and development strategy. To rely on the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) would be folly as it has inherent flaws, mainly that the various stakeholders do not trust each other. For instance, business does not trust government, because it is in bed with labour (COSATU).

The UDM therefore proposes that government should establish a Presidential Council on Planned Sustainable Development, which would be composed of all stakeholders not just ANC, COSATU and business. The government should establish Planned Sustainable Development Programmes, to create jobs and productive and safe environments for all our people. A commitment to Small Business Development must drive a new domestic-led growth strategy.

The economic choices need not be as stark as either extreme left-wing socialism, or extreme neo-liberal capitalism. In a globalising world no responsible government can allow itself to be caught in this ideological trap at the expense of its citizens. That is why supposedly staunch capitalist countries practice some form of state intervention, and vice versa, why many supposedly firm socialist countries have introduced some form of open markets.

We should introduce a policy of economic intervention by the state through Planned Sustainable Development programmes that create jobs on a massive scale whilst developing and maintaining infrastructure for the whole South Africa. These programmes will enhance economic and social infrastructure to improve the quality of life of all our people and communities.

2.9. Eskom, loadshedding and its impact on the economy

Loadshedding has had such an impact on businesses, big and small, but it is the smaller concerns that cannot sustain their businesses. There is not a business enterprise today that does not rely on the internet to function and those who solely rely on the internet for an income cannot make a living and loadshedding impacts on internet use. Part-time workers have suffered because of cancelled shifts. In each household, ordinary South Africans have had to replace appliances, in some cases repeatedly, at great cost as loadshedding and power surges destroy their devices.

For almost 15 years now, South Africa has been experiencing debilitating power failures due to the ANC government's refusal and failure to invest in new power stations in order to keep up with the energy needs of our economy. As a result, in 2022 South Africa experienced 200 days of loadshedding. It is astounding that since 2008, no successful plans have been made to dig South Africa out of this quagmire.

It is for this reason that the UDM and 17 other political parties and other concerned South Africans took Eskom, National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) and government to court regarding the provision of sustained, reliable electricity to all South Africans in line with their rights and basic service delivery needs.

The Medupi and Kusile Power Plants were hailed as mega-projects that would change the energy landscape of South Africa. We are still waiting for these white elephants to do their intended job. The entire tender was suspect, because of the Hitachi/Chancellor House deal – (Chancellor House is the investment arm of the ruling party).

This is yet another example of state capture in action, where the money that was intended to benefit the people landed straight in the coffers of the ruling party. And, yet another example of how the ruling party closes ranks when their own is in the firing line, just like they did with the Nkandla and Phala Phala sagas.

This is the very same party who ascended to power on the ticket of fighting for the people, yet they have betrayed the people left, right and centre and lined their pockets at the people's expense.

According to the South African Reserve Bank, loadshedding had a negative impact of 2.1% on quarterly GDP in the third quarter of 2022, with the agriculture, forestry and fisheries the most impacted, while the International Monetary Fund predicts that economic growth for South Africa will be 1.2% in 2023 and 1.3% in 2024 due to loadshedding.

Many businesses, more especially small and medium enterprises (SMMEs), are forced to shut down due to load shedding, which results in massive job losses and high poverty rates. This occurs against the backdrop of an SMME sector that currently contributes about 40% to the South African economy. In other words, the performance of our economy depends on the success of the SMME sector. The ANC government's unwillingness to resolve loadshedding is responsible for the rise in poverty and unemployment. This unwillingness is not surprising given the fact that the nascent ruling elite was bought off through BEE schemes many years ago and they have used the ill-gotten gains to insulate themselves from loadshedding.

To make matters worse, even the measures the governing party introduced at the beginning of the year in response crisis are elitist, at best. In that, they only seek to protect the elite and the middle class from loadshedding, while leaving the poor and previously disadvantaged out in the cold to fend for themselves. It is a fact that the poor and previously disadvantaged cannot afford to buy solar panels that the "once pro-poor ANC government" so proudly promotes and supports in response to the energy crisis.

2.10. State Capture and corruption

When former Public Protector Advocate Thuli Madonsela used the term 'State of Capture' in her 2016 report, little did she know she would coin the status of our government for far longer than the years under the leadership of former President Jacob Zuma.

The Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture ('Zondo Commission') has taken off the nation's blinkers and we have been privy to the allegations of acts of corruption in government that extends far beyond what the original brief of Guptagate was.

It has become clear that the true perpetrators, and there are many, of state capture are not possibly the Gupta family alone, as was originally understood, but a broad network of ruling-party-linked people with their fingers in the cash register, who syphoned money off not only to their own pockets, but directly to Luthuli House.

2.11. The findings of the Zondo Commission

Since the ruling party and some of its leadership play centre stage in these reports, there can be no doubt that there will be no political will in government to give expression to the Zondo Commission's findings and recommendations.

The African National Congress and some of its leaders have been beneficiaries of state looting; they have been bankrolled by Bosasa, as well as through the systematic pillaging of our SOEs. (*On a sidenote about our SOEs, the sale of South African Airways (SAA), has caused major controversy because the Mpati Commission has fingered a stakeholder in the consortium that bought SAA for a song and the public wonders what interest Public Enterprises Minister Pravin Gordhan has in the entire deal*). No-one in the ruling party can say that they were not aware of this. This whilst other parties had to scratch the bottom of the barrel to compete on an unlevel political playing field.

We had noted that parts five and six of the Zondo Commission's report and in particular its finding that the African National Congress under former president Jacob Zuma "permitted, supported and enabled corruption and state capture", and the question whether it could have been arrested, had President Cyril Ramaphosa "acted with more urgency".

The UDM has been vindicated in our long-held view that the erstwhile liberators have long abandoned the original agenda to create a better life for all.

2.12. Phala Phala Farm Gate

President Cyril Ramaphosa's Phala Phala farm scandal has rocked this nation to its core and has certainly tarnished South Africa's international image as our president. He claims to be a corruption buster but has proven to have feet of clay.

There are questions about the role and the involvement of the South African Police Services, and there are indications of a cover-up at the highest level.

The allegations of the cross-border crime and the appearance that diplomatic accords and niceties were suspended in favour of almost cowboylike tactics, have embarrassed the South African and Namibian presidencies.

The ruling party has once again proven that they will shield their own at any cost, whether it be at that of the people of South Africa and the dignity of Parliament. The ruling party's reaction to the report of the Section 89 Independent Panel chaired by Chief Justice Sandile Ngcobo speaks volumes and South Africans are again witnessing a classic example of abuse of power.

This abuse of power must be seen in context, the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture, Corruption and Fraud in the Public Sector including Organs of State ('the Zondo Commission') cost South Africa a billion Rand and yet there is no political will to give expression to its findings. South Africans will have to hold their breaths for the ruling party to correct itself. Nothing will happen until there is a new government in place after the 2024 National and Provincial Elections for action to take place.

2.13. The Covid-19 pandemic

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will be felt in the country for some time still to come, not only for the impact of the illness itself but for the impact of the far-reaching regulations and the corruption that followed. As if this nation did not have enough to contend with, the ruling party did not apply its mind on how the draconian regulations would impact on our economy and then to add insult to injury proceeded to raid the Covid-19 Relief Fund through their usual corrupt tactics.

2.14. The case of the Public Protector

There are similarities between the situations of suspended Public Protector Busisiwe Mkhwebane and former Public Protector Thuli Madonsela. The ruling party called Advocate Thuli Madonsela a counterrevolutionary and a CIA agent when she issued her state capture report and the UDM chose to defend her. We chose to do the same in the case of Advocate Mkhwebane.

President Ramaphosa has not shown clear cause as to why Advocate Mkhwebane had to be suspended and we believe the timing to suspend her is ironic, given her Phala Phala report and the subsequent revelations. The Western Cape High Court had in September 2022 declared President Ramaphosa's suspension of Advocate Mkhwebane invalid.

With the process of the Section 194 Committee there also seems to be a predetermined outcome, with Evidence Leader Advocate Bawa leading disgruntled witnesses and Parliament being turned into an appeals court of some kind. In fact, some of the witnesses have gone as far as distancing themselves from the evidence, so the question is who doctored it and for what reason.

2.15. Safety, security and intelligence

The average South African has experienced crime in one form or another and general lawlessness is at the order of the day. Our security forces are incapable of guarding our territorial borders, which leads to crimes such as illegal fishing, stock theft and poaching being committed across our porous borders.

The fact that a major fire was set in Parliament in January 2022 is a major cause of concern. The circumstances under which this was allowed to happen should worry South Africans i.e., that one of the most secure buildings in the country was so easily accessed by one so-called criminal. The damage caused by the fire cannot only be enumerated in Rands in property damage, but also in terms of our sense of security.

As evidenced by the escape of the 'Facebook Rapist' Thabo Bester, who faked his own burning death in a Mangaung prison, there is a certain amount of corruption and incompetence in our law enforcement agencies. The whole story feels like a Netflix plot, it feels so improbable in its plausibility, yet it happened. How many of prisoners are escaping that we are unaware of? Which in turn means that, aside from perpetrators walking away scot-free, their victims and witnesses are not safe.

A world class nation can exist only in a productive and safe environment which encourages enterprises to flourish whilst attracting local and foreign investments. Therefore, the UDM views the restoration of civil order as an immediate priority.

The UDM, being a non-violent movement, believes in developing effective alternatives to the current pattern of violence in all spheres of society. The UDM believes in working towards the goal of demilitarising our society; by eliminating (weapons of mass destruction) and preventing the proliferation of small arms.

In view of our objectives and the constitution of our country, the UDM fiercely advocates that crime and violence can be tolerated no longer, since it infringes upon our objectives for growth and deprives us of our enshrined constitutional rights. The UDM believes that zero-tolerance towards crime and the consequent protection of our rights must occur along with a national moral regeneration, towards a clear distinction between right and wrong.

Coordination between the ministries of justice, police services, correctional services, defence and national intelligence must be enhanced as soon as possible. In addition, a balancing act of the socioeconomic and safety needs of this country is desperately needed, otherwise we will see no economic growth.

2.16. July 2021 riots in South Africa:

The imprisonment of former President Jacob Zuma for contempt of court triggered a violent response that led to death and destruction. Yet, the questions around the reasons for the July 2021 mayhem in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng remain unanswered.

According to government estimates 342 people were killed in the riots and an unknown number injured. Commercial property worth more than R50 billion was destroyed and Africa's main highway, N3, from Durban to Central Africa was closed for several days.

Conspicuous by their absence during the mayhem were the government's forces of law and order. Caught unawares government dithered, paralysed, while ministers speculated what was behind what was happening.

Buffeted by growing mass poverty in a stagnating economy, corruption, incompetence, and the ravages of the coronavirus pandemic the ANC government is at the end of its tether. South Africa faces a failed government and according to some experts, is only a decade away from becoming a failed state.

The lessons learnt are:

- That the poor and downtrodden are prepared to destroy private commercial property and state infrastructure to vent their anger at their condition.
- That the ANC government is unable (or uninterested) to protect life and property from attack by poor and downtrodden, its core voters.
- That owners of capital cannot defend their commercial assets against physical attack by the poor and downtrodden.
- That South Africa has an emerging political vacuum (and ungoverned spaces) as a result of floundering and financially challenged governing party.
- That the political vacuum will likely be filled by interested foreign entities in the event of paralysis of domestic stakeholders.
- That South Africa has a high risk of communal and civil strife possibly fuelled by private security companies.
- That South Africa has a failing or failed government though not yet a failed state.

2.17. High levels of crime and incompetent policing

When compared to other countries South Africa has notably high rates of violent crime and has a reputation for consistently having one of the highest murder rates in the world. Cash-in-transit heists have at times reached epidemic proportions. Our criminal justice system is mired in inefficiency and corruption, some police stations are distant from the communities they serve, while others become overburdened in precincts that experience rapid urbanisation.

When suspects are apprehended, the police lack experience to prepare a thorough prima facie case, leaving the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) powerless to institute legal proceedings.

The NPA has become a toothless organisation and to further compound matters, there have been allegations that the NPA itself is corruption-ridden and some of its members have been involved in high-level crime. It will take a new guard to clean up this operation and it will take years to clear the rot.

2.18. Service delivery and civil disobedience

We also witness periodic flare-ups of violence involving communities protesting about a lack of service delivery. What is however worrying, is the anger, vandalism and signs of defiance that people display during these protests and marches, whether it be community protests, industrial action or crowds attending court cases. Even our children and students turn to violence and destruction of property when they wish to express their dissatisfaction at the slightest issue.

Government's lack of service delivery is the root cause of the dissatisfaction and then it adds petrol to the fire when it ignores the pleas of communities for attention. The precedent has been created that, to be heard, a community needs to resort to protests – the more violent the better.

At face value, the picture portrayed seems to indicate that citizens are not being listened to and hence they resort to public protests about lack of service delivery. The second conclusion could be that there are forces who have identified an opportunity to vent their anger and frustrations under the guise of 'community concerns', when in fact they are engaged in settling political scores.

2.19. Gender-based violence

As an issue high on the South African agenda, we are starting to run the risk of 'paying lip service' to the topic of gender-based violence. It has been a topic of discussion for many years, and we do not seem to be making headway in ridding the country of this scourge.

The one step in the right direction has been a heightened sense of awareness of its pervasiveness in our society. The other key step was the enactment of some new pieces of legislation, but it remains to be seen if these laws make an iota of a difference in the lives of women and children whilst the overwhelmed police force struggle to enforce the laws already in existence.

2.20. Education

Our education system has become a political football and the solution lies in firm leadership. We need to restore authority to government and not teacher unions. Government spends approximately 6% of GDP on education. Despite the significant amount of resources ploughed into our basic education system, South Africa's quality of education is very poor.

This means that our children do not get the basic education they deserve thus leaving them ill-equipped to find employment. The 2013 matric pass rate of 78.2% is meaningless when one considers that the majority of matriculants can barely read and/or write. This scenario worsens when one considers that 60% of learners drop out before they reach Grade 10.

Another factor that puts our learners and teachers at a disadvantage is the chopping and changing of education policy with the appointment of each new minister. Just when the teachers master a new curriculum, they have to start from scratch and in turn the learners suffer.

Our tertiary institutions do not provide fair access to deserving students. They suffer from high drop-out rates and do not produce enough graduates to fill the skills shortages in the economy.

The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) have failed spectacularly – after twenty years they have produced nothing more than employment opportunities for the ruling party cadres who could not find jobs elsewhere.

2.21. The LGBTQ+ community

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer and the limitless sexual orientations and gender identities-community in South Africa feel disenfranchised and marginalised.

The UDM subscribes to the supreme law of the country – our Constitution – and the Bill of Rights is clear on what constitutes discrimination. The LGBTQ+ community is therefore entitled to live their lives as they choose. In addition, the UDM's party platform includes the following basic principles:

- respect for life, dignity and human worth of every individual;
- the individual rights and freedoms enshrined in our Country's Constitution;
- tolerance and respect for the rights and freedoms of others.

2.22. Illegal immigration

It is clear that the issue of illegal immigration is a sensitive one and very much a ticking time bomb, which needs to be handled with some care and circumspection.

The strain that illegal immigration is placing on South Africa's socioeconomic and other systems is unacceptable and we have a crisis on our hands. There is also a dynamic of the exploitation of undocumented labour in South Africa. Instead of the United Nations' Refugee Conventions being applied, it seems to be a free for all here in South Africa.

The influx of illegal immigrants puts additional pressure on our already taxed, free healthcare system and the South African taxpayer foots the bill not only for healthcare, but all other services and grants provided by government. The hospitality industry appears to be exclusively hiring illegal foreign nationals as they are willing to work below minimum wage, thus robbing South Africans of gainful employment.

According to police reports, many illegal immigrants are involved in a great number of crimes in this country. Our porous borders mean that criminal elements enter the country, and we are facing the scourge of cash-in-transit heists, uninhibited drug distribution, violent robberies, counterfeiting, rampant prostitution and human trafficking.

The criminal justice system is unable to handle these problems, which makes our people feel justified in their actions against foreign nationals – legal and illegal.

The UDM suggests that as an immediate course of action, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries should have an immediate leadership summit to discuss the issue of the implementation of resolutions regarding illegal immigration.

Furthermore, we believe that the United Nations (UN) Refugee Agency should recognise that South Africa is sitting on a powder keg with a lit fuse. The African Union (AU) must take note of the same. The UDM believes that the UN and the AU should assist South Africa in solving this dilemma.

2.23. Media

The independence and therefore objectivity of state-controlled media are still severely compromised. The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) has not had a board for almost a year and the ruling party is dallying in appointing one, presumably wanting to appoint one in favour of them, ready for next year's elections? It is clear that the ruling party has rendered the SABC, not as public broadcaster which caters for all views in the country as it was intended. The ruling party wants it to be the mouthpiece and propaganda instrument of the government and it.

Generous access to the broadcaster is given to ministers of state and ruling party politicians and denied to opposition politicians. This is reminiscent of the apartheid National Party domination of the electronic media in the previous era.

The introduction of new players in the field, such as eNews Channel Africa (eNCA) and Newzroom Afrika, has somewhat levelled the playing field.

2.24. The environment and climate change

Protecting the environment and our national resources are often placed on the backburner because the consequences of abuse are not immediately appreciable. People find an issue such as the depletion of the ozone layer an abstract concept that does not directly affect them. Many South Africans do not concern themselves with the environment, because of the notion that “it does not affect me personally” and therefore do not take responsibility for their own actions.

South Africa recently unveiled an initial five-year Just Energy Transition Investment Plan (JET IP) at the United Nation’s COP27 climate conference in Egypt, with the goal of decarbonising our economy by 2030. The initial investment requirement is R1.5-trillion and government’s plan are to invest in electricity, new energy vehicles and green hydrogen. The problem experts, however, foresee is our government’s ability to implement this plan, as South Africa’s track-record with implementation is dismal, and any potential investors will continue to look for other countries to partner with.

Climate change is here to stay, and we have already seen the effects within our own borders, with severe drought and devastating floods. Our dilapidated infrastructure cannot cope with the forces of nature as we recently witnessed the giant pylons in the City of Tshwane collapse on the N4 in the wake of a windstorm that left half of the city powerless for days. Waste management in our cities and towns are atrocious and rubbish clog the waterways and sewerage systems, causing floods.

We take note of the international conventions that are in place to address the migration from fossil fuels to renewable energies. They are not cheap. Some countries in Europe plan to entirely switch to electric vehicles (EVs) by 2035 – a goal that they have long been planning for and which would seem a pipe dream in South Africa when one thinks of the current state of affairs with Eskom.

There is much pressure on South Africa to join the ranks of international green economies, but given the state of our socio-economic crises and concomitant budgetary priorities it does not seem that our green prerogatives will get to the front of the queue soon - this despite the \$8.5 billion pledge from international partners to our green economy, which seems to be a drop in the ocean.

But we must not make a mistake, the responsibility of addressing climate change cannot be that of the community alone; government has the primary responsibility to set money aside to affect change for the necessary infrastructure for an energy transition plan. International donors will not give money without some local commitment, and we might end up in serious debt since these so-called donations might have strings attached – there is no such thing as a free lunch. Government must ensure that South Africa's interests are protected, bearing in mind that we are far behind in addressing socioeconomic issues that have been around for ages. The sequencing of addressing South Africa's challenges is going to be key and we must apply a balancing act in our approach. The advantage this country has, is that we have an energy mix which can be purposed properly to supply electricity, but as we all know Eskom has been plagued by corruption.

It is unfortunate that the ongoing confusion in cabinet - a case of too many cooks spoiling the broth - where we have a minister of electricity and a minister of mineral resources and energy, and the one hand not knowing what the other is doing.

That said, South Africans will have to form an opinion on climate change and a green economy sooner rather than later to meet international commitments and the realities of climate change.

3. Political realignment

The UDM is challenged to lead South Africa out of this confusion and quagmire of corruption and parasitic exploitation. We cannot let down the people who have faith in us because they believe in our vision and mission.

The social and political revolution which released the dynamic energy that had been trapped by the social engineering of the past regimes has created a new socio-political climate in South Africa wherein new political and social alignments can take place.

The tremors of social change have dislodged people and groups from familiar traditional positions. The very essence of the UDM was an expression of this phenomenon in so far as it brought together the Roelf Meyers and Bantu Holomisas of this world. Our continued articulation of the need for re-alignment is a validation of a necessary and unavoidable political trend.

We had recognised the defections from the UDM because of the process of political re-alignment, in terms of which groups and individuals began to drift towards interest groups they feel at home with.

Likewise, there will be a drift towards the UDM from other formations by people who identify with our vision and mission. It is to be hoped that such shifts of allegiance will not elicit political intolerance and intimidation which seem to be the trademark of ruling party style of politicking.

The current pattern of some opposition groupings in South Africa largely reflects the political and social divides of the apartheid and struggle days.

The advent of freedom, however, has created a new socio-political environment, which brings into focus fresh dynamics, and demands that we shed off the blinkers and prejudices of the past, jettison the shackles of our thought habits and open our minds to new ideas and be prepared to enter into open dialogue with people from different political backgrounds who are equally committed to the formulation of a new vision for South Africa. We visualise a paradigm shift that will focus on the process that will lead to the establishment of alternative government.

3.1. Defining the Challenge

During the struggles against apartheid the ANC assembled a winning coalition that eventually brought the National Party government to the negotiation table. This coalition included the middle class and upper middle class, the working class, the poor, students, faith-based organisations, traditional leaders, sections of business and the international community.

Today the ANC represents only the interests of the African middle class and upper middle class. In adopting the policies of Black Economic Empowerment and Affirmative Action the multiracial coalition created to fight apartheid collapsed. For the core of its voters the ANC now depends on the poor population especially in rural areas which it bribes with social grants and other welfare programmes. Historically the working class was split in several ways: by race, by skill, by sector, by ideology, by religion and by party affiliation.

These fissures continue to exist in a more attenuated form. Organised labour once a strong ally of the ANC has however become greatly weakened by deindustrialisation, factions and some of its leadership being absorbed into the ruling elite.

South Africa – and indeed Southern Africa – is one of the most well-endowed countries with mineral resources. Most metals used in industrial processes are mined in South Africa. Notwithstanding this massive wealth that every day is being extracted from the earth, 40% of South African's go to bed hungry. Even more disgracefully, 24% of babies are born stunted due to malnutrition of their pregnant mothers. If evidence, were needed about the indifference and selfishness of the ruling elite to the welfare of the people this is it.

South Africa's modern mining industry – the backbone of its economy to this day – was founded by the British during the last quarter of the 19th century. It operates now as the British designed it - with some help from the Americans.

Vast numbers of black men from Southern African are compelled every year to leave their families in rural areas while they migrate to work in the mines. This system of cheap labour generates a vast pool of rural unemployed and underemployed people who now subsist on social grants. This modus operandi of the mining industry has existed for 150 years and survived and thrived under British rule as well as under the regimes of Afrikaner and African nationalists of the National Party and the ANC, respectively.

This migrant labour driven system of exploiting mineral resources creates islands of urban prosperity for the middle classes and upper middle classes of all races. These islands of prosperity and opulence are surrounded by a sea of poverty in rural areas as well as in peri-urban areas. This explains why South Africa has at once a wealthy elite who make up about 12% of the economic active population while at the same time South Africa has the highest unemployment and inequality in the world. This also explains why South Africa is an unstable country that is prone to periodic explosions.

South Africa is therefore in urgent need of a new alliance to tackle the deepening socio-political and economic challenges that the country faces. A variety of actors in the private sector, civil society and the informal economy collectively represent powerful unharnessed force that may become the source of a new co-operative alliance to tackle the country's crises.

3.2. Creation of a New Alliance

It is said that millions of voters stayed at home in the 2022 municipal elections, because they were fed up with their political party of choice (i.e. the party they “traditionally” vote for) and none of the current selection of alternative parties on the political menu had attracted their support.

The truth of the matter is the ruling tripartite alliance has failed South Africans. The thinking out there is that there is a need for a new alliance.

This picture is not likely to change for the 2024 National and Provincial Elections. So, is South Africa forever doomed to suffer the muddled and directionless politics of today, where the electorate feels uninspired to fulfil their constitutional duty to vote?

One thing is however patently clear, multi-party democracy is our only defence against one-party dominance and dictatorship, and this country is finely balanced between opportunity and disaster. As in other established democracies in the world, South Africa must therefore work towards a system where two large parties of similar strength and size vie for the mandate to govern.

Political parties might struggle to find each other, considering that they have different ideologies and political philosophies. The advantage is that precedents have been created in different places in the world where political parties with different interests work together without losing their identities.

In fact, we have the perfect local example where, for years, the ruling party comprised of communists, capitalists, traditionalists, religious groups, liberals, unionists and even their old foe, the National Party, sat at the same table and spoke the same language to advance the interests of South Africa.

Furthermore, there are more issues where we as South Africans agree than disagree, amongst others, the economy, corruption, service delivery, unemployment, poverty, education, health, environment, crime, safety and security, and civil disobedience.

It is therefore possible to rally behind these unifying issues, but we must find a workable model, a vehicle, a common language, and a common message.

Lastly, we should find a way to accommodate other stakeholders, such as civil society, labour, business, youth and gender formations, traditional leadership institutions, faith-based organisations, special interest groups, minority interest groups and the public at large.

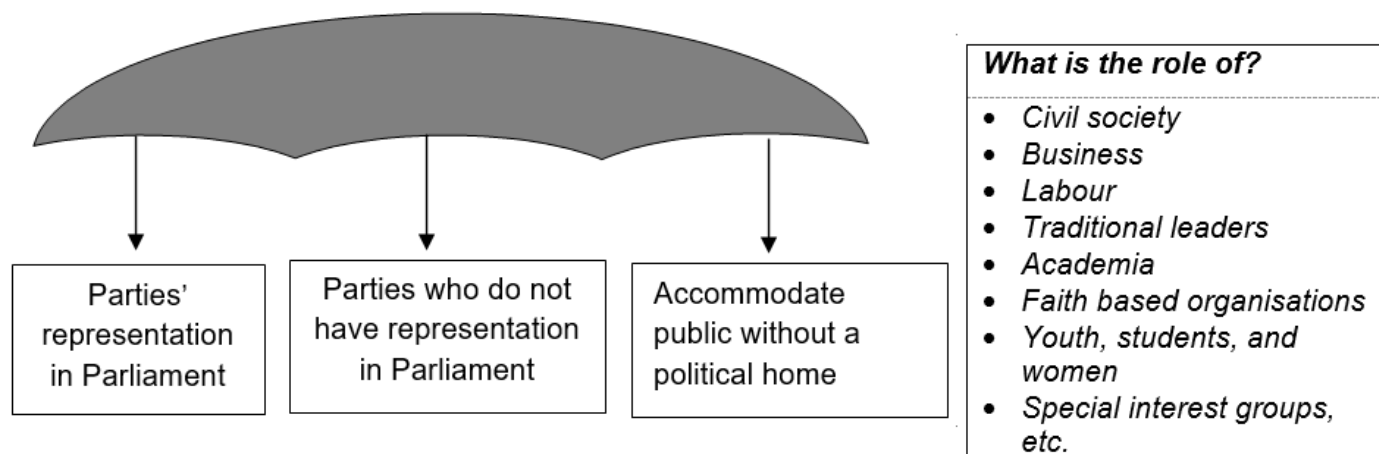
It therefore is possible for opposition parties to contest the 2024 National and Provincial Elections under one banner, but that they retain their identities. This can be done by forming an alliance i.e. a pact between two or more parties made in order to advance common goals and to secure common interests ahead of elections, with a medium to long term vision on its execution.

An alliance agreement, governing cooperation between the different stakeholders, should be drafted with a clear mission, vision and objectives and it should also define the role of each stakeholder. This would enable the various stakeholders to pursue a set of agreed upon goals, whilst each party retains their independence.

Some of the benefits of such an alliance include, but are not limited to, substantially improving competitiveness, sharing and bundling competencies and resources across provinces.

However, the success of such an alliance depends on the stakeholders' ability to create a win-win outcome for all the partners in the alliance. Formalising the arrangement would guide interaction with the public, to avoid confusion and sending out mixed messages to the public.

Should there be consensus to form an alliance, interested stakeholders should establish an umbrella body where all partners could contest the 2024 elections under one banner, without them losing their identities.



In order to contest elections, the alliance's umbrella body must be registered as a political party with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). We must strive to be as inclusive as possible, and we should champion inclusivity, equality and transparency.

The responsibility of making this project work cannot rely on only one party. It would therefore make sense to establish a Committee of Stakeholders, that will act as a steering committee, which shall be mandated to, among others:

1. *Draft a memorandum of operation, a constitution, and a contract between the various stakeholders;*
2. *Develop a name, logo, colours, vision, mission, core principles, etc.;*
3. *Give a platform for stakeholders to reach consensus on issues of common interest;*
4. *Coordinate, consult and interact with all stakeholders;*
5. *Develop a strategy of how to approach organisations and bodies outside the sphere of politics;*
6. *Develop mechanisms that will give structure to stakeholders' participation in the 2024 elections, for example the compilation of candidates lists, fielding party agents, etc.;*
7. *Develop a project plan with timeframes and deadlines;*
8. *Develop a model for fundraising and putting the necessary checks and balances in place;*
9. *Develop a communication and marketing strategy;*
10. *Design an organisational structure, with subcommittees;*
11. *Suggest a decision-making/leadership structure;*
12. *Develop a mechanism to resolve conflict and deadlocks;*
13. *Suggest an administrative support structure;*
14. *Convene a plenary of stakeholders as and when necessary.*

Looking at this model, there clearly is an alternative for the South African voter to consider, should the various potential stakeholders see the possibilities.

4. State of the Organisation

It is fundamental for any party to engage in self-criticism, to take stock regularly and to identify its shortfalls and strengths. We must do introspection and be honest about our capacity to measure up to the challenges that lie ahead. It is unfortunate, but mistakes shall have been made; the important part is that we must draw lessons from our mistakes lest we carry on in the same fashion that has proved unworkable.

Our efforts to launch branches must be continuous, even after provincial and national congresses. If we are to be strong contenders for power, we need to have a branch in at least every ward, or preferably voting station. This will assist with our election campaigns where volunteers are needed for door-to-door campaigning in the villages, suburbs and informal settlements. Such volunteers could also serve as Party agents, thus protecting the UDM's interests during elections. Branches are the foundation of the organisation and without a foundation a structure cannot stand (or grow).

4.1. Well informed members ensure robust structures

One of the major obstacles to the faster growth of the UDM has been that some leaders (at various structural levels) regard the Party as their personal fiefdoms. Such people have taken it upon themselves to bar other people from joining and assuming leadership positions. This practice does not belong to the UDM culture and runs contrary to the UDM mission and vision.

One of the ways to combat this scourge is to develop and capacitate our members to know their rights and responsibilities as UDM members.

4.2. Processes leading up to our national events

As our structures debate this document in preparation for our National General Council on 28 April 2023 and National Congress in 2024, there are some cardinal processes that must be considered by our branches and our higher up structures as we progress.

Those are the UDM's policy positions that have not been updated in some years, as well as the party's constitution that must be amended. It is our aim to be ready at our National Congress in 2024.

4.3. Implementation is key

We cannot blame anybody but ourselves for not having done our work. A classic example was the lack of follow-up with the UDM's Ascendancy Profile. It is true that the Ascendancy Profile had been a skeleton for which very little flesh was provided, but it was incumbent on provincial structures to formulate their own strategies to ensure that the Party met the stipulated deadlines.

4.4. Educating UDM members

It is disconcerting at times that many of our members in leadership positions are not au fait with the Party's political foundation and philosophy. There has been ample example where persons in leadership positions, either wilfully or out of ignorance, misquoted UDM policy and/or the Constitution.

The political education of UDM members specifically pertains to teaching our members to understand the UDM Constitution and our policies. This will achieve two goals: 1) to have a highly informed membership body means that ordinary members will be less susceptible to undue influence and underhanded lobbying and 2) they will also be in a better position to be ambassadors for the UDM.

4.5. Plastic branches

Whatever you want to call them 'plastic', 'ice cream' or 'ghost' branches this practice is unconstitutional and just plain wrong. Evidence of this phenomenon has been seen when one correlates the data of areas where it was reported that the UDM has 'só many branches', yet this promise of support did not culminate in votes. We must all agree that this practice severely weakens the UDM's organisational capacity.

The UDM has a proper membership system and the only way to eradicate the scourge of plastic branches is through a proper auditing process.

4.6. UDM Associate Structures

The UDM and its Associate Structures are one big family bound by the same major objectives, policies and vision. The mother-body structures and its Associate Structures should interact in a mutually beneficial and constructive way. This interaction must be inspired by mutual respect and organisational empathy. The UDM's Associate Structures represent the future of the Party as they serve constituencies from which the UDM will draw many of its future leaders. In recognition of this the Party has been consistent in its allowing for a quota of women and youth candidates to be added to our candidates' list for elections.

However, we must do more to invest in our women, youth and students.

4.6.1. The role of women in the UDM

True transformation ensures that women play an active and effective role in party politics. The UDM has in the past been sensitive to this aspect of transformation and the launch of the United Democratic Movement Women's Organisation (UDEMWO) bears testimony to this fact. Traditionally women of a political party are the custodians of the traditions of the organisation, and it is essential that we appreciate the role played by the mothers, daughters and sisters of our Party.

Gender issues are very complex and in the South African culture the idea that women are naturally the inferiors of men should be challenged, as should the legitimate cultural use of violence against women. The UDM must put policies in place to encourage more equal gender relations and the empowerment of women, in general and within Party structures. Education should help both women and men to understand and act upon the unequal power relations between them.

4.6.2. The role of youth in the UDM

The young people of today are the leaders of tomorrow and the young citizens of today will be the voting citizens of tomorrow. Unfortunately, there seems to be a negative energy that burdens our youth, and we need to rekindle the winning and creative spirit that lies dormant in our youth members. It is therefore obvious that the UDM must invest time, resources and information in the minds of young South Africans and make them understand why there is a need for them to be active participants in South African politics.

We need to identify the necessary strategies and tactics to help the members of the UDM Youth Vanguard (UDMYV) to help themselves; to prepare them for the responsibilities they will have to face in adulthood. In a nutshell, we must challenge our youth to redefine their role and take the initiative, and in response the mother-body will play the role of guardian and protector, whilst our young people face their challenges head on. To achieve this, the UDM must put policies in place to create a safe environment for our youth members to thrive and empower them to take care of themselves, within UDMYV and Party structures.

4.6.3. The role of students in the UDM

Students are the source of intellectual discourse, and it is here where enlightened political debate should take place. This does not discount the value and role of every member of the Party, but the UDM is in serious need of intellectual capacity to enhance the level of political discussion and debate to give credence to our policies. Many of them have graduated in the last ten years and we need to compile a database of individuals and their expertise to ensure that we begin to involve them in important tasks like policy development. It is crucial that we build a strong internal UDM intelligentsia that can engage with the challenges facing the nation today.

There might be scope for our students to forge partnerships with our youth members in order to advance the bigger movement. The relationship between the two structures should operate together in terms of political workshops, address issues of youth development and capacity building programmes.

5. Closing

Finally, the debate that this paper intends to stimulate will put diverse views into perspective and identify a philosophical outlook that binds those who are committed to pursue the vision of a shared future under the banner of the UDM.

To fulfil the UDM's ultimate goal to become part of an alternative South African government we need to soberly discuss these matters, reach consensus on our road ahead, make our decisions and implement them.

We therefore ask that all UDM members make the effort to engage with the issues we have outlined in this document so that we can make the necessary enlightened and constructive decisions at our National General Council on 28 April 2023 and National Congress next year.

Furthermore, the recruitment drive for interested individuals (both from inside and outside the Party) who wishes to be Members of Parliament and of Provincial Legislatures must be intensified so that their orientation can start in July 2023. Our recruitment initiative must deliver quality candidates who will drive the UDM's vision, mission, policies and constitution.

We need more of the Kwankwas of this world to take centre stage; those who we are proud to nurture into leadership positions. We require energetic battalions to spread the gospel of the UDM so that we can win South Africa back from the State Capturers, as we cannot tolerate another 30 years of their rule.

I wish you well in your deliberations.

Thank you.

