

## Memorandum

**Aan: Die Regering van Nasionale Eenheid**

**Van: Verteenwoordigers van die Afrikaanse gemeenskap en ondersteuners van moedertaalonderwys**

Ons, die sprekers van Afrikaans en ondersteuners van moedertaalonderwys uit alle bevolkingsgroepe:

- beklemtoon die belangrikheid van hoëgehalte-onderwys vir ons land;
- glo aan die krag van moedertaalonderrig as metode om gehalte-onderwys te voorsien en te beskerm;
- gun gehalte-moedertaalonderrig aan alle taalgemeenskappe;
- glo dat Suid-Afrika nie net 'n onderwysprobleem het nie, maar veral 'n taalprobleem;
- is teleurgesteld met die staat se stadige vordering met moedertaalonderrig vir ander taalgemeenskappe, wat tot gevolg het dat bykans 90% van Suid-Afrikaanse kinders nie in hulle eie taal kan skoolgaan nie;
- gee erkenning aan die geslagte voor ons se stryd om Afrikaans as onderwystaal te vestig te midde van moeilike omstandighede;
- glo dat onderwys in eie taal ook waardes en kultuur oordra;
- spreek ons waardering uit vir die Afrikaanse skoolgemeenskap wat 'n uitnemende skoolstelsel gevestig het;
- glo aan die gesag van beheerliggame wat ouers die reg en verantwoordelikheid gee om te besluit oor hulle kinders se opvoeding;
- verwerp die idee van staatskole waar sentraal oor skole besluit word;
- is diep teleurgesteld in die staat se onvermoë om gedurende die afgelope 30 jaar nuwe skole te bou en dan kapasiteituitdagings voor die deur van reeds oorvol Afrikaanse skole plaas; en
- glo nie net in Afrikaans of selfs moedertaalonderrig nie, maar in goeie onderwys, demokratiese besluitneming en kultuuroordrag.

Daarom verwerp ons:

- enige aanval op of verskraling van moedertaalonderrig in die algemeen en Afrikaans spesifiek;
- die Bela-wetgewing wat oor die algemeen neig om die staat meer mag oor ons skole te gee en daardeur ouers se gesag ernstig ondermyn en vernietig;
- spesifiek artikels 4 en 5 van die Bela-wet wat aan die onderwyshoof die reg gee om aan skole voor te skryf oor taal en toelating; en
- die Gautengse Onderwysdepartement se vyandige houding teenoor Afrikaanse skole.

Daarom besluit ons op die volgende aksiestappe:

- om alles in ons vermoë te doen om die uitnemendheid van Afrikaanse skole te beskerm;
- om moedertaalonderrig in die algemeen te bevorder, om sodoende uitnemende onderrig in alle taalgemeenskappe te bevorder;
- om pogings te ondersteun wat kinders, minstens op funksionele vlak, 'n derde taal laat aanleer;
- om met alles wat ons het Afrikaanse skole en Afrikaans in skole te beskerm;
- om die sentralistiese aard van die Bela-wet en spesifiek artikels 4 en 5 te beveg;
- om aktief deel te neem aan bedinging met die regering en partye in die Regering van Nasionale Eenheid om die Bela-wet te wysig;
- om spesifiek die DA en VF+ te vra om hul deelname aan die Regering van Nasionale Eenheid te heroorweeg indien die Bela-wet in sy huidige formaat in werking gestel word;
- om voort te gaan met hofaksie indien die Bela-wet in sy huidige formaat geïmplementeer word; en
- om die ontwikkeling van onafhanklike skole as aanvullend tot die Afrikaanse openbare skoolstelsel te ondersteun.

In die lig van bogenoemde eis ons dat:

- meer gedoen moet word om moedertaalonderrig in die algemeen, en spesifiek binne die wetlike raamwerk, te bevorder;
- beheerliggame en dus ouers se reg om oor hulle kinders se skole te besluit, herstel word;
- die samewerkende model wat vir bykans 30 jaar die kernpilaar van basiese onderwys was, beskerm word;
- artikels 5 en 6 van die Suid-Afrikaanse Skolewet herstel word en dat artikels 4 en 5 van die Bela-wet geskrap word;
- artikels 4 en 5 van die Bela-wet nie in werking gestel word nie, hangende bogenoemde prosesse; en dat
- gekyk word na hoe norme en standaarde, regulasies en wetswysigings aan bogenoemde beslag kan gee.

Vir ons taalgemeenskap is moedertaalonderrig in ons skole en vir ons kinders 'n rooilyn.

**To: The Government of National Unity**

**From: Representatives of the Afrikaans community and supporters of mother-tongue education**

We, the speakers of Afrikaans and supporters of mother-tongue education from all population groups:

- emphasise the importance of high-quality education for our country;
- believe in the power of mother-tongue teaching as a method to provide and protect quality education;
- would welcome and support quality mother-tongue education for all language communities;
- believe that South Africa not only has an education problem, but above all a language problem;
- are disappointed with the state's slow progress with mother-tongue education for other language communities, which has resulted in almost 90% of South African children not being able to go to school in their own language;
- give recognition to the previous generations' struggle to establish Afrikaans as a language of education in the midst of difficult circumstances;
- believe that education in one's own language also conveys values and culture;
- express our appreciation for the Afrikaans school community that has established an outstanding school system;
- believe in the authority of governing bodies that give parents the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding their children's education;
- reject the idea of state schools where decisions about schools are made centrally;
- are deeply disappointed in the state's inability to build new schools during the past 30 years and in its attempts to lay its capacity challenges at the door of already overcrowded Afrikaans schools; and
- we believe not only in Afrikaans or even mother-tongue teaching, but in good education, democratic decision-making and cultural transmission.

Therefore, we reject:

- any attack or limitations on mother-tongue education in general and specifically on Afrikaans;
- the BELA legislation which tends to give the state more power in general over our schools, thereby seriously undermining and destroying parents' authority;
- sections 5 and 6 of the BELA Act in particular which give the head of education the right to prescribe to schools regarding language and admissions; and
- the Gauteng Department of Education's hostile attitude towards Afrikaans schools.

Therefore, we have decided on the following course of action:

- to do everything in our power to protect the excellence of Afrikaans schools;
- to promote mother-tongue teaching in general, in order to promote excellent teaching in all language communities;
- to support efforts that allow children to learn a third language, at least on a functional level;
- to protect Afrikaans schools and Afrikaans in schools with everything in our power;
- to fight the centralist character of the BELA legislation and specifically sections 5 and 6;
- to actively participate in negotiations with the government and parties in the Government of National Unity to amend the BELA Act;
- to specifically ask the DA and FF+ to reconsider their participation in the Government of National Unity if the BELA Act is implemented in its current format;
- to proceed with court action if the BELA Act is implemented in its current format; and
- to support the development of independent schools as complementary to the Afrikaans public school system.

In light of the above, we demand that:

- more should be done to promote mother-tongue teaching in general, and specifically within the legal framework;
- governing bodies' and therefore parents' right to make decisions regarding their children's schools are restored;
- the collaborative model which has been the core pillar of basic education for almost 30 years is protected;
- sections 5 and 6 of the South African Schools Act be restored and that sections 4 and 5 of the BELA Act be scrapped;
- sections 4 and 5 of the BELA Act are not implemented, pending the above processes; and that
- consideration is given as to how norms and standards, regulations and amendments to the law can give effect to the above.

For our language community, mother-tongue education in our schools and for our children is a red line.

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