



**SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL CIVIC ORGANISATION (SANCO)
MEMORANDUM**

**12 DECEMBER 2024
UNION BUILDINGS
PRETORIA
TSHWANE**

The **South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO)** is the pre-eminent civic residents and community organisation across the length and breadth of our beautiful country, South Africa. SANCO embodies the hopes, aspirations, and dreams of all South African residents.

Civic activists in the streets of townships, on the shop floor, in the shafts and underground of South Africa's precious metal mines, on farms, in grazing land and cropping grounds. In our schools and universities, anywhere else you can think of, together with all other progressive-thinking South Africans, we fought the evil apartheid empire to liberate South Africa, so that we institute a national democratic society that is non-racial, non-sexist, equal and united.

SANCO was there in the Bambatha Rebellion in 1910. SANCO was there in 1912 when we resolved to establish the African National Congress so that we unite the tribes of South Africa in the fight against racism and inequality. SANCO was there in 1920 when we established the Industrial Commercial Union. SANCO was there in 1921 when we established the South African Communist Party. SANCO was there in 1922 when we convinced our white brothers and sisters in the Rand Mine strike to become a truly non-racial movement. SANCO was there for both the Defiance Campaigns in the 1920s and 1940s. SANCO was there in the Alexandra Bus Boycott. SANCO was there in Kliptown in 1955 when we adopted the seminal Freedom Charter.

SANCO was there in Sharpeville in 1960 when the racist apartheid regime gunned us down and banned our liberation movement. SANCO was there in the Morogoro Conference in 1969 deciding on how we shall continue the fight against apartheid. SANCO was there in the 1970s as we ensured that the racist apartheid regime and state is isolated and a pariah nation across the world. SANCO was there in 1979 fighting the racist apartheid regime when it tried to co-opt the trade union movement through the Wiehan Commission.

SANCO was there in 1984 fighting the racist apartheid regime when it established the Tri-cameral system. SANCO was there in the 1980s in defiance of the racist apartheid regime when it instituted multiple State of Emergencies. SANCO was there in the 1980s to be gunned down and beaten in the many massacres such as the Langa Massacre in 1985. SANCO was there when



university and school students openly defied the racist apartheid regime's casspirs and security police in the 1980s.

SANCO was there when we liberated ourselves from the racist apartheid regime in 1989 and 1990, forcing the racist regime to unban the liberation movement and release our comrades from prison, including Comrade President Nelson Rholihlahla Mandela; indeed a SANCO leader drove him from prison in a SANCO car. SANCO was there in the early 1990s, when the racist apartheid regime initiated a low intensity warfare against our people and the right wing fundamentalists tried to stop the march to democracy by assassinating Comrade Chris Hani. SANCO was there when our South African flag was hoisted above these Union Buildings and Madiba proclaimed, "Never again, never again!"

SANCO back then existed in the form of the Civic associations, which represented abahlali. As an organisation, we have therefore walked every step with South African communities, in good and bad times - do not expect us to be quiet now. Today, South African communities are in prison. It is an open-air prison, where they fear for their lives. They are scared to walk to the corner to get a bus or taxi. They lock their doors in their houses, scared of a knock on it or of thieves kicking it open. They sleep with one eye open, unsure if there is someone in their yard.

They send their kids to school, university, technology schools and so forth. They do it, unsure if their children will ever get a job. Their children are easily lured to addictive cheap drugs, because of the reality of their lives is one without hope for both the present and the future. They look around and every day they read and see politicians, celebrities, and rich people on public media, social media and mainstream media extravagantly showing off cars, alcohol, clothing and other items, that they cannot believe they will afford in a three lifetimes.

They not only read about corrupt practices by these selfsame politicians, celebrities and rich people, who never seem to be truly held to account, but they witness it in their communities. They see the police deliberately ignoring



gangsters and other powerful individuals. They learn and know that there are two types of law, one is the law and the other is that which you can buy!

South African communities are tired, indeed exhausted, of trying to justify their right to lives of dignity and safety. We do not tolerate that we must justify our patriotism and nationalist fervor of being South Africans. No Mexican would want to be regarded as a Canadian. Neither would a Ghanaian want to be told that she or he is a Nigerian, even though they are both Africans.

Why then should South Africans, especially the poor and working class, be forced to accept that any person on our continent can automatically be a South African? We are proudly South African, if we lived in any other country for work, we would remain proudly South African, more than our commitment to that country. We would adapt to the rules of that country and not expect that country to be forced to create a mini South Africa.

We, as South African communities, do not take kindly to emotional blackmail. Today we support the liberation struggle of the people of Western Sahara and Palestine. We believe they will win their struggle and one day the streets of both Western Sahara and Palestine will be free. When that day comes, they should not expect they would find South Africans in their communities demanding space, because we supported them in their liberation struggle. We do not support their struggle for ulterior motives; we support their struggle because what is being done to them is wrong.

Similarly, we are angry with our brothers and sisters on our continent, who remind us that they supported our struggle against apartheid. We are grateful for their support, we will always be. Our heroes in South Africa include Kenneth Kaunda, Robert Mugabe, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Haile Selassie, Samora Machel, Ben Bella, and many others. South African communities did not sit idly by and wait to be liberated.



For our brothers and sisters on the continent to create a falsehood that they sacrificed their very own destiny in favour of South African liberation is a lie and we cannot allow it to continue.

South Africans are not racist and xenophobic. We are patriotic and proudly South African. You see it on the rugby field, or when our Bafana-Bafana, players who may be smaller than most in physical stature but are still able to excel. You see it in the Olympics and other athletic and field events. Yet, when we insist that South Africa must be South African, which is the most diverse culture in the world, we are demonized and called ugly names. We will not tolerate this anymore.

We dare the leaders and senior bureaucrats of government and legislatures, to disguise themselves, like Madiba did in Kliptown in 1955, and walk the streets of Tembisa, New Brighton, Gugulethu, Galeshewe, Mamelodi, Umlazi and the many others. You will see that our streets, are dominated by those who proclaim no allegiance or patriotism towards South Africa. They are here just to take what they can and leave. They do not build this country but destroy it. You will see our police and other individuals, arranging an unholy devil's pact with them, like modern day Judases, being bought off for 30 pieces of silver.

Even areas like discarded mines are being invaded and running battles occurring between warring gangs fighting over territory so that the gold dust and forgotten nuggets can be retrieved. Organized crime has created protection rackets and now it is syndicated. None of this can occur without the connivance of government and security forces, as well as finance and corporate capital to clean those resources.

All of this is occurring, whilst our communities suffer from systemic unemployment, as well as underemployment, with state resources for public utilities like schools, hospitals, clinics, public transport, and basic infrastructure, all being vandalized and stripped for their metal. We do not want to call the South African government a failed one. However, we may have to, if they cannot stop the circulation of expired goods, the invasion of communities by foreigners



just bent on survival, the capture of discarded mines by criminal gangs and Zama-Zamas, and the lack of protection of lower end jobs and small businesses for the poor South Africans.

SANCO has since the dawn of democracy, consistently called on residents and communities to vote. We have reminded people that a government can only be as good as the people it represents. It is becoming increasingly difficult to justify that our government is caring. Its actions say the opposite. It's like it hates the poor of our country. It does not mind placing one burden after the other on the poor. It makes it seem that everything it does for the poor is a huge sacrifice.

It couples the victory against load shedding with callous and unfeeling electricity hikes that can prove a knockout blow to ordinary households, who are just barely surviving. The Presidency was able to intervene on the BELA Act for political stability we expect similar leadership and assertiveness when it comes to stopping this electricity hike.

Therefore, the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) on behalf of residents, community members, civic activists and all progressive and democracy-loving South Africans demand the following:

1) COMMUNITIES ARE TIRED OF LIVING IN OPEN AIR PRISONS! THE POLICE MUST WORK WITH COMMUNITIES TO GET RID OF ALL CRIME!

Communities are not politicians, who have blue lights and 24-hour security personnel. Communities are not rich people who can afford private security firms and CCTV cameras. Our lives and the lives of our children are dependent on the police protecting us.

We are tired of seeing police, both metro and the SAPS, sitting in cars and calling that policing. We expect them to patrol our streets all night and day. We want to see the police walking every street, every day so that we have visible



community policing, not this bureaucratic sham where Community Policing Forum meetings are more important than catching and imprisoning criminals.

Gender-based violence is both a scourge and reflects how crime-ridden our communities have become. SANCO want to work with government to help it to decisively intervene.

2) PROTECT THE JOBS & SPAZA SHOPS OF THE POOR FOR THE POOR!

All spaza shops must be declared small business that can only be operated and owned by South Africans. The Department of Labour and Employment must declare certain jobs, particularly unskilled ones, reserved for South Africans.

Every municipality, provincial and national government must work with communities to create a development plan for every community area. This development plan must be a central part of the District Development Model and collectively form the basis of the national budget, both annual and medium term.

3) GOVERNMENT AND THE CHAMBER OF MINES MUST WORK WITH COMMUNITIES TO SAFEGUARD AND PROTECT DISCARDED MINES

The Government and the Chamber of Mines must take direct responsibility to safeguard all mines. Zama-Zamas are not just the problem of government, but also a direct product of bad business by mine owners. Mine owners via the Chamber of Mines must work with communities to establish maintenance and rehabilitation programs for discarded mining areas.

4) PROTECT OUR BORDERS NOW!

South Africa is a sovereign country. It is a part of the African continent. Being a part of the African continent, is like being a human being, it does not mean you



lose your own identity. Therefore, our borders have to be better patrolled. Currently, it seems that anyone can just walk through and they become the responsibility of the country.

Government must protect our sovereignty by ensuring that our border cease to be porous!

5) DEAL DECISIVELY WITH UNEMPLOYMENT

All government plans promise to inculcate high economic growth rates. We are yet to experience that. Government keeps on engaging with business, who make fancy pledges, but none of it results in the 6% growth required to provide rapid employment.

We are tired of government begging business. We expect government to directly invest in our economy by forming partnerships with communities.

This is not just rhetoric. Government Ministers and MECs remain uncooperative. They ignore phone calls and emails. SANCO has requested on numerous times for meetings to discuss how South African spaza shops can be expanded and grown, but we are given the run around.

Instruct Cabinet, that when the civic movement calls they must meet with us, so that we can institute plans as partners to resurrect townships and residential areas through high, people-centered, and people-driven economic growth.

6) PHANTSI ESKOM AND NERSA WITH THEIR CALLOUS ELECTRICITY HIKE PHANTSI

Government cannot be unaware how tough the last fifteen years have been for ordinary South Africans. Yet it allows ESKOM and the National Electricity



Regulator (NERSA) to approve electricity tariff hikes that will result in a breadwinner deciding who should starve tonight, their child or their mother!

Government cannot unbundle ESKOM and put together all these fancy plans, but then expect communities to pay for them. It will not get an agreement from large bulk users to help ESKOM stabilize but expects ordinary communities, who are too often jobless, unemployed or underemployed and just about surviving to rescue government from its own bad management of ESKOM!

These electricity hikes are wrong. SANCO would hate to revive a call for non-payment. However, if these hikes occur, it would be difficult for us to not to respond to the demands of communities.

7) ESTABLISH A JOINT SANCO & GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

We expect the Presidency of the South African Government to establish a joint committee before Christmas 2024 that can report in three months on the plans for each of these areas of demand. The Committee must be made up of both senior political and administrative leadership of the government.

We expect the committee to be jointly chaired by the President of South Africa, President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa and SANCO.

AS DELIVERED ON 12 DECEMBER 2024 AT THE UNION BUILDINGS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL CIVIC ORGANISATION (SANCO) TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA.

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MIKE SOKO
SANCO GENERAL SECRETARY

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PRESIDENCY OF SOUTH AFRICA

