A new year has begun, bringing with it fresh hopes and new challenges. I am sure that I express our collective conviction when I say that during this decade, each year has brought us closer to our cherished goal — the total liberation of our country.

The bells that rang in the New Year were, for us, a call to battle, summoning us to ever greater involvement and persistence in the struggle for democratic change. We can and will meet the new challenges successfully. The confidence with which we make this bold assertion is based on our unflinching commitment to fight with all our might, making all the necessary sacrifices, until victory is ours.

Today, January 8th, 1985, we observe and celebrate 73 years of the African National Congress. As has been the practice in the past, the National Executive Committee of the ANC addresses an annual message to you on this our national day. To do so is both a duty and a privilege.

It is a duty because history has entrusted us with the destiny of our country, and we therefore must together render to one another, to the allies and active supporters of our struggle, and to history itself, an account of our stewardship over the past twelve months. We must together analyse and learn from our experience on the battlefront to victory, to carve out the path to our historically determined destination.
A Future to Fight For, an Enemy to Face

To address you, compatriots, on January 9th, 1985, is a privilege. For we are addressing a fighting people, who, during a particularly ferocious offensive by the enemy, have accumulated a record of resistance and struggle worthy of our great heroes and martyrs, a people who not only have the resilience that defies defeat, but also the capacity to rise to the challenge of the hour and move on to the offensive, a people with a glorious future to fight for, a tough and brutal enemy to face, an assured and epoch-making victory to win.

It is five years since we rallied our people around the demands of the Freedom Charter during 1980, the Year of the Charter. This year, as we mark the 30th anniversary of that historic document, we can with confidence say that, in struggle, millions of us have reaffirmed that the Freedom Charter constitutes the embodiment of our deepest aspirations and the blueprint for a new South Africa.

1984 saw us take bold steps forward on the road to freedom. The path we have traversed was fraught with numerous dangers and hazards. But, despite these, it is clear at the end of 1984 — the Year of the Women — that we have succeeded in shifting the balance of power within our country in favour of the forces fighting for national liberation, social justice and genuine peace in Southern Africa. Through persistent collective labour and dedication, we have made significant progress in forging a mighty people's movement against the racist monstrosity. As we said last year, it is in the attack that victory is to be found.

Unity of the Oppressed

By attacking, we defeated the efforts of the racist regime to mobilise the Indian and Coloured, or so-called Coloured, sections of the Black population into acceptance of the apartheid constitution.

By our refusal to be bullied into acceptance of the enemy's constitutional schemes, we reaffirmed our determination to defend the unity of the Black people in pursuit of a common victory against a common enemy. We were asserting the truth that freedom is indivisible, that freedom for some is freedom for none, and hence, that no section of the Black people can be free while another is oppressed.

The defeat of the enemy's plans in August expressed our common assertion that apartheid cannot be reformed. By boycotting the apartheid elections we denounced Botha's "reform" programme as a sham.

These victories were of great importance for the further advance of our struggle. They served to raise the degree of isolation of the oppressive regime, and strengthened the ranks of the forces committed to the victory of the democratic revolution in our country. They confirmed our commitment to the revolutionary perspective of the seizure of power by the people and the building of a new society in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

Organised Workers of our Country

By attacking, we frustrated the enemy's attempts to contain the militant democratic trade union movement and transform it into a tame and timid shadow that accords with the regime's wishes.

This increased the fears that the White minority regime has of the power of the organised Black workers of our country.

That is why, during the past year, as at other times in the past, it has imprisoned, banned, banished and even assassinated leaders and activists of the democratic trade union movement. We take this opportunity to salute the workers of our country, who, in the teeth of the most vicious racist persecution, have sustained and kept alive the spirit of militant democratic trade unionism such as is embodied in the policy and programme of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU).

During 1984, in addition to the magnificent shop-floor struggles waged by the workers, we were inspired by the united action taken by Black and White workers, and their various unions, in their confrontation with Highveld Steel. Again, in October, for the first time in 38 years, the Black mine workers embarked on a co-ordinated national offensive in this most sensitive sector of the South African
economy.

The lesson from the victories we have scored and the advances we have made is that, in future, our objective must be that wherever a struggle erupts — be it mine or factory, a farm or a building site, a shop or a service centre — we must emerge from such struggles with stronger workers' organisations, a higher level of political consciousness and a greater determination to fight on as a united force, whatever the cost to ourselves as individuals.

The organised workers formed the core of the historic Transvaal stay-at-home which paralysed industry and commerce in the economic heartland of the country and compelled the capitalist owners of property to speak out. In an unprecedented move, the organisation of the leading capitalists drew the attention of the ruling group to the fact that the continued use of the old methods of repression would only serve to inspire the workers to intensify their offensive.

During this massive struggle, we achieved a level of united action among all sections of the oppressed, and the democratic forces as a whole, which must serve as a basis for the further escalation of the united people's struggle for the victory of the national democratic revolution. We warmly salute all the workers and trade unionists who, in action, affirmed the correctness of the perspective we put forward last year, and the offensive of the working class is, and must be, an integral part of the national liberation struggle.

The Youth, the Pride of our Nation

The student and working youth of our country have once more confirmed their place in our hearts as the pride of the nation. These relentless fighters for a South Africa that we can proudly call our own have, throughout this past year, swelled the ranks of the mass movement by joining the struggle in hundreds of thousands. Despite the campaign of murder and terror unleashed by the racists against them, including the very young, they have stood firm in their demands. They have refused to break from the ranks of the struggling masses. In saluting our students and working youth, we can truly say that they have earned for themselves the honour of being called the Young Lions.

Through their action, supported and reinforced by the workers and the parents, they have forced the apartheid regime to give ground on many issues. To build on these advances, we must ensure that the Education Charter becomes the common platform of teachers, parents and students in the mass struggle for a democratic system of education.
A special responsibility devolves on our youth during 1985. By its decision to observe the International Year of the Youth, the racist regime has thrown down the gauntlet to the youth of our country. Among the numerous crimes this regime has committed and continues to commit against our people, some of its most heinous have been specifically against our youth and children.

On the shoulders of the apartheid regime rest such crimes as the scandalously high infant mortality rate amongst Black children; the stunting of their growth through the use of child labour; the warping of their intellectual development through Bantu Education.

We designated 1984 as "The Year of the Women" with the express purpose of concentrating our efforts on the mobilisation of our
womenfolk as active participants in the struggle waged by our national liberation movement. The response to our call, "Women Organise and Unite for People's Power" has been commendable. New democratic women's organisations have emerged. Greater numbers of our womenfolk have been drawn into struggle.

We observed historic days like the 30th anniversary of the Federation of South African Women at impressive rallies. National Women's Day — August 9th — was turned into a week of campaigning against the fraudulent Coloured and Indian parliamentary elections. In this manner our womenfolk further promoted the unity of all the oppressed and democratic forces, transcending the barriers of race, colour, sex and creed.

Intensive grassroot mobilisation of women as equal participants in the overall national struggle has laid the basis for the creation of a national women's organisation which could be founded on the principles contained in the historic Women's Charter.

Women Fight in the Front Ranks
Our women were active in all the battles which confronted our communities during the Year. In many of these, as in Sebokeng, they fought in the front ranks. As parents, mothers and workers, they stood firmly beside their menfolk and children against forced removals, starvation wages, increased rents and taxes, inferior education and health services, demanding full citizenship rights for all our people in a unitary, non-racial society.

The encouraging response of our women to the call to join Umkhonto We Sizwe, which has resulted in more women joining the people's army during the course of the year, has been one of the best ways of observing the Year of the Women.

The reaction to our appeal by the international community in general, and women's organisations in particular, in practically all the continents of the globe, was most outstanding in mobilising more moral and material support for our struggle. This support was crowned by the presentation of the Eugene Cotton Award by the Women's International Democratic Federation to our dear sister and mother, Albertina Sisulu.

We call on our women to build on these impressive achievements. We urge other sections of our people to continue to give their support and concrete assistance to our heroic women, mothers and sisters, so that they can play their rightful role as co-fighters and co-liberators of our motherland.

Trade Union Unity
Despite all the achievements we have so far made, we are still faced with the necessity of accomplishing other tasks we have set ourselves, particularly the unity of the democratic trade union movement. 1985 is the 30th anniversary of the founding of SACTU. During this anniversary year, let us consolidate the gains we have thus far registered. We need to intensify our efforts to form one united democratic trade union federation. No democratic trade union should be excluded from such a federation.

The working class of our country has demonstrated its combativeness in the unprecedented number of strikes that took place during the past year. So that this militancy will not be dissipated, we should now strive towards one union for each industry, the organisation of the unorganised and the unemployed, and the launching of a mass offensive against the reduction of our living standards. We should treat the injury done to the 6 500 SASOL workers as an injury to all workers, and to all of us.

We must harness the collective strength of
the working class not merely to improve the immediate economic conditions of that class, but to bring about democratic change in our country. The ANC joins those trade unionists who call for greater involvement on the part of workers and their unions in the struggle for democratic change.

1985 falls on the centenary of May Day. In recognition of the bonds that link the workers of South Africa with those of other lands, May Day was marked in a number of industrial centres throughout South Africa during 1984. We call on all our workers to ensure by their actions that May Day is recognised as a paid public holiday.

In a unique show of international solidarity, the Black mine workers, who are amongst the lowest paid and most brutally exploited of our workers, dipped into their over-lean pockets and made a modest donation towards the strike fund of the British miners, who are waging a life and death struggle to save their jobs. We take this opportunity to commend this exemplary action on the part of our miners.

People's Right to the Land

The dispossession of our people of the land that is theirs remains one of the most burning national grievances. The gross injustice of this historic crime has been compounded by the racists' arrogant attempt to deprive the African majority of their inalienable birthright as citizens of their country, South Africa. Millions of our people in the rural areas are brutally exploited as agricultural workers on farms carved out of their ancestral lands. Their daily lives are dominated by the dictates of the racist White farmers and agricultural companies against whom they have absolutely no redress, because they are the least organised and mobilised. The land question must be resolved, if needs be, the hard way.

In the meantime, we repeat our call to our people to give serious attention to the organisation and mobilisation of our rural masses. Basing ourselves on the needs of the people, and taking due account of the concrete conditions of their existence, we must devise suitable organisational structures and mechanisms to reach our rural masses and provide them with the organisational and political tools to defend themselves against exploitation and to assert their right to the land. As we said last year, we must place the perspective of seizing the land from the dispossessor in front of our rural masses and educate them to understand that this is a task that calls for dedication, determination and sacrifice.

The solution to the land question is inextricably tied to the struggle against the Bantustans, where the puppets, not content to do the dirty work of the Pretoria racists, have taken it upon themselves to impose even greater burdens on our oppressed people. Some of these Bantustan puppets have taken firm positions on the side of their masters in Pretoria and against the oppressed people and their organisations. Whenever the popular masses rise and deliver, telling blows against the apartheid system their puppet voices are heard above the din of battle, denouncing the people and defending the people's enemy.

While opposing the revolutionary violence of the national liberation movement, they have not hesitated to unleash systematic violence against the fighters for the people's cause. They have banned the trade unions and brutalised trade union activists. They are fanning fratricidal conflict amongst our people in order to ensure the perpetuation of the apartheid system from which they benefit. Some have gone so far as to ban the UDF and other democratic organisations. This situation can no longer be countenanced. The offensive against the apartheid system must be extended to reach the Bantustans and other apartheid institutions in all corners of our country and among all population groups.

The plight of the thousands of our people whose homes are regularly bulldozed to the ground, and who are regularly bundled up and transported to distant and inhospitable parts of our country, requires our full attention and concerted actions of solidarity. We must elaborate organisational methods and forms of action to halt this crime against our people and to express, in a concrete manner, our solidarity with them. As we have said, we must organise
the unemployed into organs of struggle, enabling them to engage in a determined offensive for jobs and adequate unemployment allowances.

Pretoria Plots with the West
We have just gone through what was definitely one of the most trying periods in the experience of our movement and struggle. We have survived one of the most lethal attacks on our movement. Our courage and tenacity as a people during the difficult days of 1984 enabled us to withstand a fierce enemy onslaught and proceed to launch the biggest offensive that has inspired our allies and friends to greater supportive action and solidarity.

Effectively exploiting unprecedented natural calamities, the historical legacy of colonialism and by using its own puppet forces, the regime sought to impose conditions on the neighbouring states which were intended to paralyse the ANC and cripple the liberation struggle. A plot was jointly hatched between Pretoria, the United States and some countries of Western Europe which, in a bid to drive a wedge between ourselves and the rest of the people of Southern Africa, sought to coerce their governments to turn against the ANC and the liberation struggle. This plot was equally intended to sow divisions among the Front Line States themselves and to distance them from the rest of Africa.

At great cost to themselves and their people, the Front Line States have borne the brunt of overt racist aggression, deliberate acts of economic disruption and political destabilisation. To their great credit, they have stood united and resolute in their commitment to the cause of African freedom and independence, and especially in their total support for the ANC and SWAPO.

The Kingdom of Lesotho, completely surrounded by racist-controlled territory, has, with singular courage and determination, persistently rebuffed the aggression, bullying and blackmail of the Pretoria regime.

These countries of our region have now been reinforced in their stand by the decision of the 20th Summit Meeting of the OAU to give priority attention to the struggle in Southern Africa. Under the current Chairmanship of President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Chairman of the Front Line States, the OAU is poised to intervene effectively during the current year.

World Support for our Struggle
As we stated last year, our struggle consists of four interlinked and mutually reinforcing elements. These are, first, the vanguard role of the underground structures of the ANC; second, the united mass political action of the people; third, the armed offensive spearheaded by Umkhonto we Sizwe; and fourth, the international campaign to isolate the apartheid regime while winning world-wide moral, political and material support for the struggle. With regard to the second of these elements, there can be no doubt that we have registered great successes in raising the united mass action of the people to higher levels.

It is equally undeniable that we also achieved new victories as regards the fourth element, namely, the drive to isolate the apartheid regime and to win world-wide moral, political and material support for our struggle. In this regard, we should mention a few salient successes.

The efforts of the apartheid regime to break out of its isolation have ended in dismal failure. Botha’s visit to Europe ended as a severe rebuff for the racists. The new government of New
Zealand adopted firm positions against the apartheid system, forcing the Pretoria regime to withdraw its diplomats from that country. The widespread and unprecedented demonstrations in the USA against apartheid and the Reagan Administration's policy of 'constructive engagement' are an accurate barometer of the mounting isolation of the apartheid regime as well as of the increasing scope and depth of support for the cause of liberation in South Africa and Namibia.

Likewise, the attempts of the apartheid regime to project itself as reformist have been exposed and condemned by the international community. Accordingly the UN Security Council has rejected Botha's amended apartheid Constitution as null and void, and of no force or effect. It affirmed the need for majority rule in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

And yet these achievements are not sufficient. We need to intensify our international offensive in the New Year, further to isolate the apartheid regime, strengthen our own ties of solidarity with progressive humanity and thus further complicate the situation of the apartheid regime within our country.

During this past year we also took our struggle forward by beginning to carry out another strategic task we had set ourselves. As you will recall, last year we said we must begin to use our accumulated strength to destroy the organs of government of the apartheid regime.

We Reject Illegitimate Rule

We have now set out upon this path. We have taken impressive strides towards rendering the country ungovernable. This has not only meant the destruction of the community councils; our rejection of the apartheid constitution was, in its essence, a reaffirmation of our rejection of the illegitimate rule of the Botha regime. Other struggles, including those around the issue of education as well as the stay-at-home, themselves pitted our democratic power against the power of the forces of oppression, racism and counter-revolution, for the defeat of the latter and its replacement with popular power.

In this coming period, we shall need to pursue, with even greater vigour, the task of reducing the capacity of the colonial apartheid regime to continue its illegal rule of our country. The destruction of the organs of government weakens the regime and is a necessary part of our continuing mass offensive.

The victories we scored during the year have plunged our opponents into an even deeper political crisis. Apart from denying them the chance to expand their social base, they further sharpened the contradictions and conflicts within the ruling group, and exposed the utter bankruptcy and failure of the overall political programme of the racists. These are important successes as they help further to weaken the enemy and shift the balance of power in our favour.

The Regime Knocked Off Balance

Through struggle, we have forced the apartheid regime into a situation of confusion, indecision and an inability to define for itself any consistent direction of state policy. This situation has arisen because the efforts of this regime to project itself as a representative of the so-called forces of moderation, gradual and peaceful reform, have ended in failure. According to this tactical manoeuvre, the racists sought to present themselves as a reasonable and acceptable alternative to the revolutionary alliance headed by the ANC, on one hand, and the fascist coalition of the HNP and the Conservative Party on the other.

Knocked out of balance by the intensity of our offensive, the White minority regime lurches from side to side, fumbling for an equilibrium it can no longer regain. On one day it pretends to be concerned about the condition of the Black majority and, on the next, pledges itself to the maintenance of White minority domination.

At the same time, the posturing of this regime has angered large sections of the diehard racists among the Whites who see the maintenance of the apartheid system as a holy crusade. Moved by their attachment to the benefits that accrue to them from the system of national oppression and the super-exploitation of the Black majority, the political
representatives of this tendency in White politics are challenging the Botha regime for the allegiance of especially the Afrikaner population.

The disarray in the enemy camp has compelled some to examine the fundamental premise of the entire system of racial oppression. The realisation has begun to dawn on some of Botha's own supporters that no solutions to the problems confronting our country are possible without the participation of the Black and democratic majority, and the leaders of this majority.

There are yet others from among our White countrymen who, more far-sighted than others, have decided to break with a system that is so patently criminal. These have joined the democratic movement. We are confident that the numbers of such White compatriots will grow as an integral part of the forces of liberation which are destined to defeat the apartheid regime and liquidate the criminal system it upholds. In order to hasten the advent of that day, we must give the enemy no respite; no time to regroup and recover lost ground. It requires that we must stay on the attack.

Role of the Masses
We are entering the second half of the 1980s. When we cast our minds back to the Year of the Charter — 1980 — and the subsequent years, the one feature that stands out is the ever-expanding and visible role of the masses of our people in the making of this history. As we enter this second half of the Decade of Liberation, it is necessary that we examine not only our striking power, but, even more important, the direction in which to strike and how to deliver the blow. In particular, it is necessary that we ask the question: at what pace — how fast — are we advancing towards the conquest of power?

The pace of our forward march depends on our success or failure to strengthen the first and the third of the four interlinked elements we have referred to, namely, the all-round activity of the underground structures of the ANC and the armed offensive spearheaded by Umkhonto we Sizwe.

With regard to these two decisive elements of our revolutionary struggle, we should neither dramatise our shortcomings nor blind ourselves to the reality that we have not advanced on these two fronts at a pace corresponding to our advance on the other two.

To move forward to victory with the greatest speed, we must pay particular attention this year to the task of building a strong underground presence of well-organised revolutionary cadres, drawn from the fighting masses and integrated among them. Such a body of cadres constitutes the dynamising factor in our situation — a force capable of bringing together the various strands of our struggle, and assisting in the further development and consolidation of all our political and military combat forces into a mighty army of liberation.

The call we are making to all the democratic and patriotic forces of our country is that this year we must take it as our special task to strengthen and reinforce our vanguard organisation, the African National Congress. Already we have made great strides in this regard. And yet the imperatives of our struggle demand that we do not any longer postpone execution of the task we elaborated last year — to strengthen and expand the underground structures of the ANC, ensuring the active presence of our movement everywhere in the country.

Who Are the Cadres?
Who are these revolutionary cadres about whom we speak? Where are they? They are not special people. It is we — men and women, young and old, Black and White — who are involved in daily struggles, making sacrifices in pursuit of the people’s cause. It is we, the workers in the factories, the mines, the farms, the commercial establishments and offices of various kinds; we, who work in health and educational services as well as those of us occupied within the residential areas.

The distinctive feature of the revolutionary cadre is a high level of discipline, dedication and courage in carrying out the tasks assigned by the movement. Such cadres are guided by
our goal of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. They fight for the immediate release of Nelson Mandela and all other leaders and political prisoners. They accept that our path to victory lies in a combination of the all-round activity of the ANC, united mass political action, armed struggle and international solidarity and support.

It is now 25 years since the illegitimate regime in our country proscribed the representative and leader of our people — the African National Congress. The apartheid regime banned the ANC exactly because it wanted to, remove from our midst this dynamising factor in our struggle. Frightened by the fact that we have nevertheless defeated its efforts to destroy our mother body, this regime has now made mere membership of the ANC a treasonable offence. However, through our relentless, daring and death-defying actions, we have compelled the enemy to admit that, as before, the ANC is central to the solution of the South African problem. We must build on this achievement to ensure that in this second half of the Decade of Liberation, the ANC emerges more powerful than it has ever been.

ANC the Alternative Power

We further charge the ANC and all other patriots to continue to shift our posture to the offensive and, as we said last year, to cultivate the spirit of rebellion and the frame of mind which puts the politics of revolutionary change to the fore. The programmes of action that we plan and carry out should result in the initiative passing further into our hands. Our mass democratic and revolutionary movement should emerge ever more forcefully as the alternative power in our country.

Through struggle and sacrifice, we have planted the seeds of people’s war in our country, that is, a war waged by all the people against the White minority regime. One of our central tasks in the coming period is to transform the potential we have created into the reality of people’s war.

Guided by that perspective, we must build up the mass combat forces that are training themselves in mass political action for sharper battles and for the forcible overthrow of the racist regime. The mass combat forces of our revolution are the same political forces that are and have been engaged in the popular offensive. These death-defying patriots must now become part of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the vital cutting edge of our onslaught.

It is in this way that we will ensure that the people’s army deepens its roots and grows inextricably among the popular masses. It is in this way that we will ensure that it grows in size, in the spread and quality of its operations and the weight of every blow it delivers.

In the course of our mass offensive, we have, from time to time and with increased frequency, created the situation in various localities such that the democratic forces challenged the apartheid authorities for control of these areas, emerging as the alternative power. With regard to the perspective of people’s war, this means that we forged the conditions for us to transform these areas into mass revolutionary bases from which Umkhonto we Sizwe must grow as an army of the people.

In all the struggles that we waged in the past year, regardless of how peaceful they were, the enemy confronted us with its armed might. In Sebokeng and other areas, the apartheid regime deployed thousands of regular troops in an attempt to crush the people’s resistance.

At such moments who among us did not feel the urgent need for us to talk to the enemy in the language he understands best? Who has not seen that we too must take up arms as did our forebears, as did Bambata, Solomon Mahlangu, and as did Clifford Brown, only last year!

All we are saying, therefore, Fellow Combatants, is that we have it within our means to increase our capacity to hit back at the enemy, arms in hand. No one but ourselves will accomplish this task. We must all take it as a priority task to build up the popular armed forces, to transform the armed actions we have thus far carried out into a people’s war, by helping to root Umkhonto we Sizwe firmly among the people and actively drawing the masses into the prosecution of a people’s war.
Furthermore, all the oppressed need to emulate the example of the areas where the democratic movement has emerged as the alternative power. Wherever we are, we must transform our locality into a mass revolutionary base. In such areas, we should also use the democratic power we have accumulated through struggle, to defend and advance the interests of the people. We must use our organised mass strength and, by attacking, consolidate our victorious emergence as the alternative power.

The cultural workers — artists, writers, musicians, poets, sportsmen and sportswomen — have the capacity to enrich the overall effort of our people in our quest for national liberation.

We charge our cultural workers with the task of using their craft to give voice, not only to the grievances, but also to the profoundest aspirations of the oppressed and exploited. In our country a new social and political order is being born. Our artists have to play an even bigger role as midwives of this glorious future. Let the arts be one of the many means by which we cultivate the spirit of revolt among the broad masses, enhance the striking power of our movement and inspire the millions of our people to fight for the South Africa we envisage.

Apartheid Economy in Crisis

The continuing and deepening crisis of the apartheid economy confronts all of us with the task of defeating the efforts of the apartheid state and the bosses to shift the burden of this crisis on to our shoulders. This crisis is not of our making. It is the result of the exploitative capitalist system as well as the huge state expenditures to maintain and strengthen the enemy army and police and to finance the political and administrative structures of the apartheid system.

Why then must we finance the commission of a crime against ourselves by paying an ever-rising General Sales Tax, increased food prices, rents, fares and so on? Why must we continue to lose our jobs, adding to the millions already unemployed, while the apartheid regime and the employers recruit skilled workers, especially from Western Europe?

We should therefore unite in action to demand food and not guns, jobs for the unemployed, and the diversion of resources to improve the lives of the impoverished masses. The wealth we create with our labour should not go to enrich a small clique and oil the machinery of apartheid, while millions suffer from starvation. In this struggle we expect the organised workers to play a central role, both to fight off the attack on our living standards and to help bring about the democratic society in which the wealth of our country will become the patrimony of the people.

Salute to our Heroes

We salute and pay tribute to the many heroes and heroines of our country who have laid down their lives in our struggle for liberation.

We extend our greetings to the leaders and activists of the democratic movement who, despite arrests, detention, and every form of persecution by the enemy, have stood firm and persisted in the common struggle to defeat and destroy the racist regime. Once more, we pledge to our leaders incarcerated on Robben Island, Pollsmoor and other prisons that we shall not rest until the cause for which they have sacrificed emerges triumphant. The very fact of the arrest and detention of UDF and other leaders, some of whom have been charged with treason, emphasises the continuing importance of the struggle for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners.

We take pride in the fact that the international conscience, expressing itself through the Nobel Peace Committee, has decided to award the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize to a Black South African — Bishop Desmond Tutu. This is the second instance within 23 years that our people, and Africa, have been given this honour. Bishop Tutu walks in the steps of our beloved Chief Albert Luthuli.

There is no doubt that this is a tribute to our selfless dedication and our resistance to one of the most cruel and inhuman systems the world has ever known. The award does great credit to the role of our religious communities
in the struggle for liberation and should be an inspiration to all of them to get the heresy of apartheid expunged from the statute books and from our lives. It once more emphasises the importance our people and the rest of the world attach to the contribution the religious leaders and masses of our country must continue to make in the struggle for justice, peace and life itself.

Sister Nations, Sister Movements

We greet the fraternal people of Namibia and especially welcome among fighting ranks of our sister movement, SWAPO, the new Secretary General of SWAPO, Comrade Andimba Herman Toivo ja Toivo and his colleagues, whom the apartheid regime was forced to release from long terms of imprisonment. Their release and continued involvement in struggle will bring closer the day of freedom and independence for Namibia. In this regard we, the people of South Africa, demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of South African racist troops from Namibia and Angola.

We pay tribute to the Front Line States and the Kingdom of Lesotho for their firm and principled actions in defending our right of struggle and upholding the legitimacy and duty of Africa and the world to support our struggle.

We recognise the important contribution made by the OAU and various international organisations including the United Nations and its Agencies, the Non-Aligned Movement, the World Peace Council, the Socialist International — to mention but a few. They are largely responsible for ensuring that apartheid remains at the centre of world attention as a crime against humanity.

We congratulate our Palestinian brothers and sisters for successfully overcoming attempts to liquidate the Palestinian struggle. We support the call by the PLO for an international conference in furtherance of the struggle for a sovereign Palestinian homeland.

We condemn the continuing efforts of the US Administration to destabilise and overthrow the popular government of Nicaragua and express our firm and militant solidarity with the fraternal people of that heroic country.

We express our solidarity with the people of Grenada whose right to self-determination was grossly violated and continues to be circumscribed, following the naked aggression by the US armed forces.

We salute all people engaged in struggle for national liberation, especially El Salvador and East Timor. We pledge solidarity with all those struggling to defend their sovereignty, including the peoples of Southern Africa, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, the Middle East, Afghanistan and Cyprus. We welcome the successes of the democratic forces in Latin America, and are confident that the foothold of the apartheid regime in the American sub-continent will be totally eliminated.

Our people have come to appreciate and value the consistent solidarity and growing support for our struggle given by the socialist countries, the Nordic States and other countries.

Our ties with various governments, political parties and parliamentary groups in Western Europe and Australasia have grown stronger and we look forward to ever-closer relations and greater co-operation with them in the struggle against the apartheid system.

We pay tribute to the millions of people involved in the ever-expanding work within the worldwide anti-apartheid movement. They constitute a solid base of support for our struggle internationally. It is through their daily, and sometimes unknown, efforts that governments and peoples are kept alive to, and mobilised in action against, the numerous ploys of the South African racists to whitewash apartheid. In this context we welcome the momentous campaign undertaken by the people of the United States, which involves legislators, judges, bishops, trade unionists and other outstanding personalities and government officials, and which is targeted on pressurising the Reagan Administration to reverse its support for the Pretoria racist regime.

We salute all these supporters and unsung heroes working for the cause of world peace
and closer fellowship within the human race. We take this opportunity once more to dip our banners in memory of that outstanding friend of our struggling people and movement, the late Indira Gandhi. We are certain that her successor as Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, will continue in her footsteps further to extend much appreciated all-round support to our struggle.

Year of the Cadre
Rumours, emanating from the South African mass media, have been circulating about 'talks' between the African National Congress and the Botha regime. There have been no such talks. Your organisation at this juncture is concerned to improve our capacity to accomplish the tasks we have set for ourselves in the unfolding year. In this respect we shall, as you know, be holding a National Consultative Conference this year, from which we shall emerge united and doubly strengthened to carry our struggle forward.

The strength of any organisation lies in the calibre of its individual members and units. In order to advance in keeping with the momentum of our struggle we must improve the quality and expand the quantity of our membership. We need cadres of unquestionable loyalty, dedication and understanding of our struggle. In order to achieve such a high standard and spur our nation into a greater onslaught on the enemy and its institutions, we declare this year, 1983, the Year of the Cadre!

Let this year see us take big strides in further strengthening the organised underground structures of the ANC. Let it see greater mass political actions in all the provinces and districts of our country. Let it see us extend people's war to all corners of our land. Let it see the fastest and furthest possible coordinated advance on all fronts towards the goal of people's power.

There is no going back. Forward Always is our battle cry. The enemy cannot stop us. Our future is in our hands.

Forward with the Year of the Cadre! Mobilise and March Forward to People's Power! Amandla Ngawethu! Matla ke A Rona! Power to the People!
Compatriots,

As the New Year begins, and on the occasion of the 74th anniversary of your vanguard movement, the African National Congress, we extend to you our warm revolutionary greetings. We salute you also in the name of the people's army [Llhoko We Sizwa].

We speak to you fully aware of the immense responsibility that rests on all of us to make the apartheid system of oppression and exploitation, repression and aggression a thing of the past. It is our singular honour that we have been charged with the serious responsibility to point the way forward in the coming period. We approach this task with the same seriousness that has inspired you as you launched countless heroic mass battles during the year that has just ended.

The passage of that year, the Year of the Cadre, is simple and yet momentous. It is that the end of the criminal system of apartheid is in sight. Nearly four decades of illegal rule by the heirs of Hitler is coming to a close, and with it, centuries of colonial and racist white minority domination. There is nothing that the Pretoria regime can do that can change this historic outcome of our struggle.

Our uninterrupted forward march has thrown the apartheid system into an enormous general crisis. A central feature of this crisis is the rebellion of millions of our people against the criminal system. Even the most stubborn racist can now see that we are no longer prepared to live as slaves and are determined to liberate ourselves whatever the price we have to pay in human lives.

Realising that power is slipping out of its hands, the Botha regime could not rule in the old way any longer. Hence it has adopted new and more brutal ways of governing our country to save itself from destruction. These include the proclamation of martial law, handing over administration of large areas of our country to the murderous army and police, the use of secret death squads, the assassination of our leaders, massacres, mass arrests, stringent control of the press, continuing external aggression and the murder of our people outside our country.

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Despite these extraordinary measures designed to safeguard racist rule and reassure the white minority, the reality is that the white power bloc has never been as divided as it is today. Conflict, indecision and fear of therorotution within this bloc has extended to within the ranks of Botha's own cabinet.

An important part of the crisis afflicting the racist system is the gathering collapse of the apartheid economy. To the oppressed and exploited, know the bitter meaning of this crisis. We know the harsh reality of retrenchment, unemployment, a galloping cost-of-living and banishment to the Bantustans and resettlement camps.

Now, the burden of the economic crisis brought about by the apartheid system is beginning to weigh heavily on the whites as well. White unemployment is increasing. Many conscripts return to civilian life without jobs and with no prospect of employment. Thousands of small and medium businesses have collapsed. Individual bankruptcies have multiplied without stop.

Completely unable to deal with this enormous general crisis, Botha has increasingly lost contact with reality. Illusions are taking the place of facts. The hollow dreams of a tyrant appear to him to be the very essence of policy. Botha relies on bombast and bluster to hide the fact that he is no more than a fleeting shadow. on the world stage.

The Botha regime has lost the strategic initiative. That initiative is now in our hands. The racist regime has no policy and can have no policy either to save the apartheid system from sinking deeper into crisis or to extricate this system from that crisis. Its political programme has been reduced to a shambles. Its ideological platform has collapsed. All it can do now is to react to events from day to day, without any consistent plan and without any overall objectives, except to keep itself in power for as long as possible.

It can no longer guarantee a bright future for the white social forces on which it rests. At the same time, the Botha regime is confronted with our mass revolt. Botha knows that the masses of our people will not stand by passively while he tries out one apartheid experiment or another. We shall not abandon our forward march, allow ourselves to be diverted from our goal of one person one vote in a united South Africa, or in any way cooperate with the Botha regime in the execution of programmes aimed at the perpetuation of the apartheid system.

Taken together, these factors signify that strategically the enemy is on the defensive. The critical point is that any counter-offensive the oppressors may
launch to gain some tactical advances will, at the same time, only result in further worsening their strategic position.

The fact that the Botha regime has lost the strategic initiative, and is therefore on the defensive all along the line, is of decisive importance for the further advance of our struggle. We have forced the racists into this position through consistent struggle both inside and outside our country. This is an inspiring victory of historic significance.

The principal conclusion we should draw from this situation is that through our sacrifices, we have prepared the conditions for us further to transform the situation to that position when it will be possible for us to seize power from the enemy. Thus the central task facing the entire democratic movement is that we retain the initiative until we have emancipated our country.

We must achieve this by going on the offensive on all fronts, continuously and boldly. We have to fight with a clear purpose in mind, with a definite perspective of our strategic and tactical goals so that we can deploy and utilise our forces to the best advantage. Victory demands that we also continue to work for the maximum unity of all our fighting contingents and the democratic movement as well as a coordinated approach towards the four pillars of our struggle.

Our strategic goal must be to shift the balance of strength decisively in favour of our struggle, through the further ripening of the revolutionary situation beyond the point where the regime is not able to rule in the old way to the stage where it is in fact unable to govern. Thus, we must continue to make South Africa ungovernable and apartheid unworkable. In the attack we must aim further to weaken the Botha regime drastically, to sap its strength, to take away from it even the capacity to launch a limited counter-offensive.

Simultaneously, while on the march, we must build our forces into an ever more formidable united mass army of liberation, an army that must grow in strength continuously, able to deliver and actually delivering bigger blows at every stage and fighting as a conscious force with its eyes firmly fixed on the goal of the destruction of the apartheid regime and the transfer of power to the people.

The central focus of our continuous offensive has to be the imposition of the will of the democratic majority over the racist minority, however desperate and stubborn the resistance of this minority.
This regard, a question of primary concern to us all is that of education. We have stated our stand on this issue in clear unequivocal terms.

What we want is one democratic, non-racial, free and compulsory system of education. The broad principles underlying that alternative system of education are contained in the Freedom Charter.

To take this opportunity to salute our students who have continued to march forward in unity and in an uninterrupted and organised offensive, undeterred by the illegal banning of their organisation, COSAS. This achievement is a victory of the entire democratic and revolutionary movement of our country and is worthy of the young lions of the struggle that our students and working youth have become.

This year, we shall be observing the 10th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising. We shall therefore cast our minds back on a period during which thousands of our youth killed and maimed in the struggle for a democratic system of education in a democratic country. A whole generation is growing up and has known nothing but daily violence meted out in the streets by the armed killers of the apartheid regime.

To honour and pay everlasting tribute to the thousands of our students and working youth whose blood has drenched our Motherland, in the struggle for freedom and in recognition of their resolve to march forward to victory, we declare June 16 South Africa Youth Day. We are confident that our youth and students, through the length and breadth of our country, will prove themselves worthy of this National Honour.

We owe those young lions of our struggle and the nation as a whole, an obligation to institute an alternative system of education during this year, the 10th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising. We hold an important national conference on this question in Johannesburg and adopted decisions that are of singular significance to the entire democratic movement and to us as a people.

Above everything else, what we shall need in order to realise the programme of action we set ourselves, is the maximum unity of the students, teachers and parents and of the entire democratic movement, including the community and student organisations, the trade unions, the youth and women’s movement, religious, and all cultural and sports organisations. United in action, we have the ability to win our struggle for an alternative system of education, to secure the release of all student leaders and activists imprisoned by the Pretoria regime, to force the lifting of the ban on COSAS and to win all the other demands that we have agreed upon.
Of great importance also is the need for us to ensure that we have an organised youth and student movement reaching into all schools and all areas of our country, capable of continuing to organise all our youth to act with the same discipline and unity, on a national scale, that we have seen in the past. We must continue to work for the establishment of a national youth organisation. To win our demands, we must be organised.

We also seize this occasion especially to welcome most warmly the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions. We extend to its leaders, its affiliated unions and to the membership of those unions the revolutionary greetings of the ANC leadership, inside and outside prison and inside and outside our country, as well as those of our entire membership.

The struggle to form one democratic trade union centre has been hard and protracted. Many comrades have spent countless hours working to achieve the result that was consummated with the formation of COSATU. We all acted in this manner convinced of the need for the unity of the working class of our country, of the imperative to defend and advance the interests of this class and of the necessity for the organised, united and conscious workers to remain in the front ranks, and as an integral part of the mass army of revolution that is today shaking the apartheid system to its very foundations.

The formation of COSATU has therefore added enormously to the strength of the democratic movement as a whole and is a victory which this movement must defend at all costs.

We appeal to those democratic trade unions which still remain outside the fold of COSATU to reconsider their positions. We are convinced of the maturity and honesty of both their leaders and members. Accordingly we are certain that at this critical moment in the history of an entire people and region, they will find a way to overcome all obstacles that bar their way to join COSATU.

Many problems remain to be solved to fashion the new trade union Congress into the instrument of working class and national liberation that the delegates visualised at the founding conference in Durban. These include the transformation of the general unions into industrial unions, and the organisation of the unorganised and the unemployed. These are important tasks whose accomplishment rests on the shoulders both of COSATU and the democratic movement as a whole.

Fellow Workers,

During the year 1986, we shall mark two historic anniversaries. These are the 40th anniversary of the great mineworker's strike of 1946 and the 100th anniversary of May Day - International workers' Solidarity day.
In connection with the 40th anniversary of the great miners' strike, we call upon the entire democratic forces and especially the trade union movement, to draw on the revolutionary traditions of the African Mineworkers in order to enhance the contribution of the workers to the cause of national and social emancipation.

It is totally unacceptable that up to its 100th anniversary, May Day in South Africa, has remained an ordinary working day. We therefore fully support the workers' demand that from 1986 onwards, May Day should become a fully paid public holiday. Our entire democratic movement must support the organised trade union movement in the struggle to realise this demand.

That outstanding product of the creative initiative of the masses of our struggling people, the United Democratic Front, has borne the brunt of the futile terrorist juggernaut of the Botha-Malc-Grootboom regime to defeat our mass offensive and to suppress our democratic organisations. To this day, the threat of prohibition hangs over the UDF. Yet we are convinced that, having more than survived the assassination and imprisonment of its leaders, the cold-blooded murder of its followers, the banning of its meetings and so on, the UDF will overcome all attempts by the enemy to wipe it out of existence. Practice has more than amply demonstrated that the struggling masses of our country need the UDF as an instrument to maintain, advance and deepen our united action.

We salute all its leaders, its affiliated organisations, its members and its followers. We hail all those of its leaders and activists who are in prison and those who are facing trumped-up charges which include treason, murder and public violence. We call on all our people to stand by these patriots.

We pay homage to the outstanding leaders and others of our people who were murdered this past year by the death squads, the army, the police and henchmen of the apartheid regime. Among these are Victoria Nkongo, Matthew Goniwe, Andries Batisela, Ben Motlo, Samuel Tobikodo, 'Bashiruwa Ndondo, Mohamed - Allie Razak, Mta Ngobeni, Sipho Mutsi, Ian Zuma, Kel Mwansa, Liza Ngcana, Daniel Kabonyana, Mandlenkoski Kratshi, Ivan Lungu, Ncoako Ramalo and Kenneth Letlabi. Their example of selfless service to the revolution will live on, inspiring us to intensify the struggle until victory. Those who assassinated them will be brought to book.

We shall not forget those who have disappeared and have so far not been accounted for. Neither shall we forget the patriots, such as Thami Knyale, Sipho Phaklo, Nonkosi Kini, Jackie Quin and Leen Mayor and others who were murdered in KwaZulu and Gaborone. The names of Molly Blackburn and Brian Bishop will also be inscribed on the roll of honour.
In the light of the situation which obtains in our country today, the religious community has an immense and urgent responsibility to act in defense of life itself, and accordingly, to fight for justice and peace. Inspired by their own faiths, this important sector among our people must further enhance its contribution to the struggle to end the apartheid system and to create a society in which the right to life will be respected.

At this point, we would also like to pay special tribute to the women of Mamelodi, both as a particular detachment of the democratic women’s movement and as a force exemplifying the courage and determination of the hundreds of thousands of women who have stood at the forefront of our mass struggles this past year, throughout the country.

The response of the apartheid regime to the peaceful march of the women of Mamelodi, which ended in a massacre, illustrates the fear that this regime has of the united offensive of the oppressed and exploited women of our country. This year we are observing the 30th anniversary of the historic women’s march on Pretoria, an event which lives on as a source of great inspiration to all our struggling people. It will be the task of our women— to imitate the example we set ourselves three decades ago and last year, to unite and fearlessly join the mass offensive against the Botha regime in even greater numbers. We should also continue to work for the formation of a national women’s organisation.

During the momentous Year of the Cadre that has just passed we have also produced new organisational formations and adopted new forms of struggle in keeping with the heightened pace of our revolution. We refer here to the mass combat units that we have formed to carry out various tasks, including those related to the destruction of the organs of government of the apartheid regime and to making the country ungovernable. We refer also to the measures we have taken, among other things, to protect our leaders and to maintain revolutionary law and order in various localities throughout the country.

It is fitting that these developments have taken place during the Year of the Cadre and in keeping with perspectives that your movement, the ANC, put forward for that year. Our struggle has gained enormously by the emergence of these collectives of revolutionary cadres, which are organised, rooted among the masses, ready to pay the supreme sacrifice if necessary, committed to the perspectives of our movement as a whole and loyal to the leadership of that movement.

We salute all members of these combat units and commend them for the courageous and disciplined manner in which they have carried out their tasks. We urge the