



Visits in and out of court were just a stunt to stay in office illegitimately with an eye on power and other material benefits for themselves.

The three year journey was long for this leadership. We lost the then Deputy Leader and the President who was elected with us through death. We also had positional changes which will be accounted for in the executive report.

Perhaps Charles Dickens may have foreseen our tenure in office when he wrote:

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way – in short the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.”

All the contrasts in the passage best describe the situation in the party when the new leadership took over the reins. Two years ago when I took over we had a slogan: “Business Unusual” which meant that with all those concomitant difficulties we shall strive to keep the party afloat and ashore even if it may be in unorthodox ways as long as it would be legal.

For the current year and going forward we say we shall: “Stand up and Speak Out” even if it means taking risks. We need to be vocal and not be like dumb driven cattle. We have to be heroes in the strive for survival

As a party that operates nationally, we should have a national look and outlook. The Constitution of the party which we defended successfully in court stipulates in no ambiguous terms that we should not be trapped into turning the UCDP into a microcosm of a family or families, we should guard against reducing this national asset into a provincial or regional and even tribal entity.

The vision of the party, which is read worldwide on our party website, states clearly that this party strives to be the leading party in uniting all South Africans, Christians and non-Christians alike in a truly democratic non-racist and non-sexist nation inspired by the desire to work together in building a prosperous and free nation.

With that in mind we should not be tempted to hobnob and deceive ourselves and others saying some are old, some are not Tswana and others come from far flung areas that were not part of some defunct and disestablished territory. We should learn to live what we say and accept that this party if it has to survive needs members in the entire Republic and all those who live in it.

For the party to survive it has to be serviced. Resources have to be put in it by all members not only elected representatives. It is very unfortunate that most members do not regard it as their business to participate in party matters from branch level. The party should not be seen to be alive at national level only.

Without getting lost in the web and maze of other things members of the party should strive to be technologically literate. We have come to accept the convening of meetings through sms and whatsapp. Elsewhere they are on twitter and promote policies of the party by using such gadgets.

All members should stand up and speak out in defence of the party, for it to survive and progress. All members must place views and respond to virile statements bandied about the party. Facebook is a medium where views and debates are posted these days. Sitting back and watching television or listening to Motswedding is not sufficient.

I want to congratulate some of our youth league members who do not tire to raise issues and even stand up to respond to matters raised in the public domain. That is good guys; it looks like when the baton of leadership gets into your hands the apartheid phobia still gripping some will have gone.

The rampant abuse of state resources and power by the current government has to be shown the middle finger. The terrier like conduct of the Ministers in the Security cluster towards Thuli Madonsela, the Public Protector, is a shameful conduct that belongs to the era of the P W Botha days. That conduct has no place in our democracy.

We are in discussions with other political parties on how to maximise our strengths as a collective to stand up to abuse and arrogance by the ruling party. The Deputy President and I have attended meetings with these other parties in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Durban. Except that our reservations on the passing of the Secrecy Bill were vindicated when the president declined to sign the bill into law, we have made our position known regarding objection to same sex marriages. We have begun interactions with another sister Christian party to work on issues of common concern and interest. Members of the party will be kept informed of progress in this regard. The UCDP in striving to unite South Africans cannot and should not be a loner.

The rush and concerns raised by the cluster of security ministers in government on the Nkandla report shows that they have something to worry about and even to hide. This is the time we should stand up and speak out against this abuse of state resources under the guise of presidential security measures when the very president openly states that he is not aware of all those embellishments and fitments at his residence.

Where on earth has a swimming pool been cited as a security feature, how can a bar be termed a security feature and how does a cattle kraal feature as a security feature?

Barring the ineptitude and haplessness of the African National Congress - led government in the North West Province, the national government does not play a role in ensuring that services are equitably provided. It is a shame and an indictment on the ANC that the two airports in this province that had international licenses are rotting in disuse. There are no regular flights in and out of this province while others have an abundance of the same. It is high time that people stand up and ensure that they will not be prepared to pay for those toll roads in Gauteng when and while they live in a province with decrepit roads which President Zuma himself stated with an open face on the occasion of discussion of their main ideas for the manifesto that the province does not deserve good roads. Only Johannesburg deserves such roads not Rustenburg.

We have to be on the lookout and ensure that the ANC government serves the nation. We should serve as watch dogs for the nation and not lap dogs for the ANC.

We cannot sit back as crime shoots through the roof

We cannot look on haplessly as the education system flounders

We cannot throw our hands in the air while food security is lacking

We dare not fold our arms while incompetent officers prowl in offices

Surely it calls on us to ensure that cronyism and nepotism in government are done away with

The list of ineptitude is long and is a matter for another day.

I shall be remiss if I cannot thank members of this party country wide for giving me and my colleagues in the National Executive Committee to direct the fortunes of the party. Some we have never met face to face but they bought our message through the telephone and did as advised. It is an opportunity that I will cherish for a long time.

I need to thank my colleagues in the executive for bearing with me. I know I am a hard task master to the extent that some say I am fastidious, I thank the staff in the offices both in parliament and the national office who, despite my hard line in calling for work, still look up to me with respect and appreciate that we are about the business of the party not anything else.

I shall be out of order if I cannot thank my family for accepting an absent father like me. My better half Nametsegang has shown her stoicism and fortitude through all the raging storms and lives with the full knowledge that someone has to do the job. My three surviving children, Nontuthuzelo, Nomathamsanqa and Xolani, grown up as they are, always hanker to have good time with their father who is most of the time away on party matters.

My lovely grandchildren Nomsa, Mzioxolo (the Big Man) and Lethokuhle, Ntombi to grand pa, make me nostalgic wherever I am when I think of them but their innocent smiles and love every time I am home make me fulfilled.

With that, dear delegates, I wish to call on you to deliberate freely yet orderly and like heroes and heroines in the strife and real political militants, let us stand up and follow the UCDP all the way.

In conclusion Madam Chair, allow me to revive and rekindle the resolve of the delegates as follows:

“Onward, Christian Soldiers, Marching as to war,

With the cross of Jesus going on before

Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;

Forward into battle see His banners go!”

It gives me great pleasure to declare the 2013 UCDP Federal Congress officially open.

I thank you