

## POLITICAL REPORT TO THE FEDERAL COUNCIL

24 SEPTEMBER 2012

SIPHO MFUNDISI

PRESIDENT: UCDP

We live in the worst of times in this party, the country and the world over.

It is bad when members of a party rise against one another, worse when an octogenarian wants to cling to power and leadership of the party when he knows full well that he has nothing to offer in modern political times.

It is bad when a supposedly democratic government unleashes fire on protesting mine workers and kills up to two score plus of them as it happened at Marikana. It is an issue the ANC government will live to rue for the rest of their being- or could I say until Jesus comes again. It is great that a Christian leader, Bishop Joe Seoka, brokered peace and a solution to the jigsaw. Christians still have a role to play in this country. The Deputy President represented the party when opposition parties went there to do inspection in loco on the incident. The ANC really caused anarchy in this regard.

The Federal Council should own the party on behalf of the members in the interim of the congress. Court woes should not be the baby of the NEC only while Federal Council members reduce themselves to mere spectators in the situation.

It is unfortunate when the youth of the party do not know their place and exploit the structure they have in the youth league. It cannot be in order that office bearers of the league want to elevate and equate themselves to members of the National Executive Committee pound for pound. A treasurer of the league is but a treasurer of the youth league and not an equivalent of the treasurer of the party and this goes for all officers. The youth league, just like the Women's League, is not an independent appendage of the party. Their constitution is meant to give them autonomy NOT independence. They therefore cannot hope to micro manage the party.

The constitution of the Youth League spells it out clearly that in the main they have to mobilize the youth for the party, and not to jostle in a “who is who” or bosso ke mang type of manner with the party office bearers. It may be that some conduct is caused by the feeling of thinking they are forsaken and left to their own devices.

In the wake of the so-called management committee having been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Appeal in March 2009 in the matter between R. Matlholwa and the UCDP, the NEC has a proposal for consideration by the Federal Council to attempt to close the *lacuna* among leaders of the party and its structures. We hope the council will buy into the proposal.

The constitution of a party is not a Bible that cannot be amended. This document has to be revisited to make it relevant to the present times. What is worse is even clauses that are contained in the constitution have never been applied since its inception. We cannot and should not be held hostage by a line which says “We should give equal opportunity to all” and attempt to confine it to representation in the legislatures only when we are at the dusk of our lives. Simply put and applied, it means giving as much opportunity to all even in leadership in all the levels of the party. The NEC has, in light of this spirit, resolved to have the Youth and Women’s Leagues appointing representatives to the National Party Liaison Committee. Gone are the days of Selkirk on the island of Juan Fernandez when he said: “I am the monarch of all I survey, my right there is none to dispute”. That is trite and inapplicable in a democracy what more in a Christian Democratic Party.

South Africa is gradually getting to be known as a crime capital. The recent release of crime statistics draws a lovely picture claiming that crime is going down. There is concern however that it is only in Kwa Zulu Natal and Gauteng that criminal acts have fallen. In the other seven provinces criminal activities have risen. Statistics on murder have fallen only in four provinces namely Western Cape, Gauteng, Kwa Zulu Natal and Mpumalanga. The other five provinces are hell to live in. You will notice that the North West province is a common denominator in all instances of rising crime. Watch your back!

The NEC has had meetings with some institutions nationally. Our delegation met that of FEDUSA. I hope a report will be tabled at some stage. The presidency had a meeting with the Public Protector; the president will again attend a conference organized by her office at UNISA on 15/16 October.

We have honoured invitations from the office of the State President and those from national ministers and virtually shared the stage with them to address the nation, something unusual for the UCDP! We have however apologized today; we should be sharing the stage and addressing the nation at Upington were it not because of logistical problems and this Federal Council meeting.

There is a general, but genuine, complaint that the UCDP is not being sufficiently covered by the electronic media. I have therefore come to the conclusion that a committee, under the leadership of the national Chair, be put in place to meet the SABC and state our case. It is not helpful to complain to and among ourselves about a matter residing elsewhere.

In view of the parlous state of the party in the Ditsobotla region, the NEC felt that we could not let a by-election go uncontested. The party virtually ran the occasion. Thanks to all those who put their hands on deck especially the Youth League through their president Mr Monyadiwa. Though we lost the election, we have not been disgraced. I hope a report will be tabled on the whole exercise.

All elected representatives will from tomorrow, 25 September to 05 October HAVE to visit and address meetings at some areas in the discharge of their duties during constituency period. We shall try to have a coordinated exercise rather than the usual *indoda iyazibonela*.

In our effort to ensure that the party belongs to the people, you are aware that unlike the usual centralist control of the party from head office even up to branches, your NEC believes that in true democratic management style, the party has to be run by the people. The inaugural North West provincial congress will be held in due course upon which other provinces will follow. The benefits of devolution of responsibility by having these constitutional structures will see the UCDP grow to give effect to the cry *Gola UCDP! Gola*.

The party cannot grow if it is kept and possessed by a few to the extent of even making major decisions on the party with their daughters and a handful of some fortune seekers! I want to state categorically that the party, the UCDP, belongs to the people, that is members and not to me and my daughters or any other member of the executive for that matter.

As I go towards rounding up, there is something that has left a bitter taste in my mouth – the failure by members of the party particularly municipal councilors to attend the funeral of one councilor, the late Motlopi Nkgobang. We must remember, united we stand but divided we fall. I hope we shall also find time to breathe on this matter and the way forward. I however have to thank councilors from Ga-Segonyane, Ganyesa-Pomfret and Mahikeng Municipalities who took of their time and resources to go to pay the last their last respects. *Le ka moso bagaetsho; aitsane fifing go tshwaranwa ka dikobo.*

The unfortunate situation in the Northern Cape where in four months there has been no schooling because the ANC-led government has failed to deliver services is cause for concern. I am making efforts to meet the people in the area or the Acting Premier of the province, whichever comes first. In Setswana *kgengwe o a nne a lekwe.*

We surely live in the worst of times if even a Setswana name written in standard orthography can be changed at great cost to Serolong. I hope Batlharo will not revert to the Moffat ways of spelling!

We need to be heard on issues such as racist attacks like the electrocution of labourers in Vryburg. Why are we quiet when a convicted murderer and former speaker of Rustenburg continues to draw a salary while he is behind bars? We surely live in the worst of times if a man can be beaten to death simply because he sports a long beard. How many white men sport such beard and who kills them?

I hope we shall have a fruitful council meeting today.

Ndiyabulela!

Ke a leboga!

Dankie!