

STATE OF THE PARTY IN THE COUNTRY
Sunday, 29 January 2012
Barolong-boo- Ratshidi Hall

The Presiding Chair
Colleagues in the National Executive
The President of the Women's League and your Executive
The President of the Youth League and your executive
The Pastor who fed us spiritually and other pastors
All Honoured guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

We are gathered today 29 January 2012 exactly a year after we met at the Mmabatho Convention Centre where this current was executive was elected. You will remember that the executive is not as they were elected at the time owing to three reasons, first there was a resignation by the then chair, secondly her replacement resigned too and she was re-elected to the chairmanship and thirdly we had a forced change occasioned by the death of our former President Mrs Mavis Matladi, may the Lord save her soul. We hope not to have further changes until the end of our term.

The executive committee you have today is almost entirely new though there is only one new member, the current Secretary General. All other members were affected by positional changes like yours truly the president.

First and foremost it has to be brought to the attention of all that the United Christian Democratic Party is registered as a party to operate at national level not a regional or provincial party as some of our detractors, self appointed analysts and cynics are inclined to argue. This party has to vie for recognition and acceptance across the length and breadth of the Republic.

We shall therefore be giving a national picture or position of the party

We have come to say to the Lord, thank you for having sustained us so far. We have come to say to you our members and all South Africans we have travelled so far.

Since taking over the running of the party we are beset with running legal battles against the former founder leader, some members and some former employees. Even in March the party will be court against him. We

therefore started with almost all entirely new employees whom we wish to thank for having assisted the party through the darkest hour.

We contested local government elections only 4 months after getting into office. We did not fare well as our registration of candidates was marred by delays from some municipalities and confusion around the central registration that the IEC called for and the subsequent change to local registration. This resulted in many of our municipalities not being registered to take part in the election. We regret this and undertake that it will never recur.

The failure resulted in the party having only 25 councillors in both the North West and the Northern Cape only. This after the party had registered candidates in 6 provinces namely the North West, Northern Cape, Limpopo, Western Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga.

On 28 May 2011 the EXCO called all the elected councillors to a meeting at which, for the first time ever, council whips were appointed by the party leadership and announced to them. We also appointed councillors who should serve as executive committee members in municipalities where there are such structures. We did this to ensure that people do not appoint themselves to positions in municipalities. We are aware there are some who are not happy as they are not appointed to those positions but equally we know you satisfy some and annoy some in such matters.

Because councillors have issues of common concern, we asked them to form a Councillors Forum. They were asked to elect a steering committee to assist in such matters as the national executive committee does not want to concentrate control of all matters among themselves. Democracy calls for power sharing. They are busy with the constitution and will be reporting on that in due course.

Madam Chair, the time has come that our members should rise to the occasion and desist from being passive spectators on government matters such as advertisements by the Municipal Demarcation Board to comment, advise or recommend on boundaries only to come complaining to the party to say that the result does not favour them when they never made an effort to influence the decision making.

In the spirit of business unusual we have sought to bring the two leagues on board to have them take an active part in party issues like you saw this morning. We contend that taxation without representation is tyranny.

They can't be expected to mobilise voters during election time but not have a word on days of festivities like today.

We saw the Youth League conduct their national electoral congress though that exercise was beset with internal strife as aspirant politicians are wont to be position seekers than people who are concerned about the future of their organisation and that of the party. To this end the national executive, in the spirit of *kgakagolo ga ke na mebala, mebala e di kgakaneng*, allocated them some R20 000, 00 to spur them on to action but little has been seen or even heard of them. They tend to talk much elsewhere about their envisaged personal comfort while doing less thus giving credence to Shakespeare's saying that: "Talkers are not good doers". This has to be nipped in the bud.

The Women's League, though alive and alert to the needs of the party, have yet to hold their national congress and elect new national leadership. It has to be borne in mind that democracy demands that elections have to be held regularly according to the term of office of those holding office in terms of their constitution. It does not matter how many times such people are elected and re-elected as long as they get a new and fresh mandate from term to term. The constitution of the women's league needs some tweaking to make it relevant to the present times and politics.

In the not-so-distant future the two leagues will, after consulting their constituencies, address the nation on developments affecting them.

It has come to light that even the constitution of the party in its present form has past its sell by date. The document that we put together 17 years ago in a sweetheart type of spirit cannot withstand the rigours of the present day politics. This was bared by the continuous high court battles we had in the party and was crowned by the Supreme Court of Appeal in March 2009 when a unanimous decision by the judges on the bench ruled that some clauses in the constitution were obsolete.

The Constitutional Review sub committee put in place will have to hasten their pace and submit a document for scrutiny by the party.

Despite what we said earlier about the perception held by our opponents that the UCDP is a provincial party, we have been our worst enemies in this regard as no effort was ever mounted to put provincial structures in place. This executive undertakes to ensure that come the end of 2012 each province will be having a democratically elected executive. This, in our view, will enable the provinces to be ready in 2014 to put up their

own candidates' lists that will not be drawn by the national office. We shall be ready to handle even the eventuality of having the local government elections running concurrently with the provincial and national elections. In this regard we depend on the provinces to play ball. They should buy in and rid themselves of being armchair critics. Power has to go to the people and not concentrated at head office.

The constitution of the party states clearly that people have to be given equal opportunities; not necessarily opportunities in parliament or legislatures as some are wont to explain and confine it to that but also opportunities in leadership so that the party should have a pool of leaders trained at provinces and get them prepared and ready for national leadership. Our party and constitution provide for a federalist approach to governance but we have made ourselves used to central and Marxist control from the national office. This is unusual to federalism. The arguments for that will be tabled at our next Federal Council meeting.

The spirit that prevailed in the formative years of the party has waned and there is need therefore that we start afresh and do our business unusually by putting up a political school to educate our new entrants. To this end the national executive committee will elaborate in due course.

[Die gees wat in die begin jare van die party geheers het het verlaag en ons moet weereens begin om ons sake andersom te doen deur 'n politiese skool te stig om sodoende die nuweling in die party op te voed. Die bestuurskomitee sal in die nabye toekoms daarvoor lig gee.]

It remains to be seen to what extent we are alert to political developments around us. I hope all regions and branches have put across their views to the municipal demarcation board to avoid complaining long after the horse has bolted. We are aware there is the issue of councillors in government employment not holding two jobs. We have to be alert to these and grapple with them.

That the Grade 12 results have somewhat improved across the country is commendable but we also note that some schools have failed all their candidates. It cannot be business as usual at those schools when the year begins. We regret the death of a mother who was trampled to death in a stampede for registration at the University of Johannesburg recently. It is very unfortunate that a mother should lay down her life for her son in this fashion.

We call on our members to take interest in the education of their children by being available to stand for election as School Governing Body members to ensure that they have a say in their schools. We should not allow the African National Congress to continue with their efforts to hegemony unchallenged even in our homes.

We noticed how the ruling party celebrated their 100 years of existence recently but we have to set the record straight here. They proved to be real strangers to the truth as they were vocal in saying they extended invitations to all parties represented in parliament. For the record the United Christian Democratic Party was not invited. We do not lament it anyway all we seek to clarify is that we attend occasions to which we are invited.

We are not sure how it is going to be done but all we know the provincial government of the North West is buying into our proposition to rebrand the province or simply put to change the name of the province from the cardinal point it is to something substantive. Let us watch the process and participate actively if it does take off the ground.

Earlier we referred to the ongoing wrangling between the current leadership and the former. Fact is when leaders differ followers get divided and align themselves with those they fancy, thus creating factions which is unwholesome to any organisation. We pray much the strength of all concerned to rise above personal issues and allow the party to grow and take its rightful place among political parties of the country and the world. We look forward to reliving the ethos of the past:

“Tshwaraganang lo dire pula e ne” (Unite in diligence to prosper).

Let us here and now warn those charlatans who go round in the North West fooling themselves and some unsuspecting people that they are electing office bearers in the regions. They are going to meet their Waterloo. There is only one UCDP registered with the IEC. Those who think otherwise will have to go to court like they were advised on 28 January 2011. No lose cannons or dissidents masquerading as UCDP organisers will be tolerated.

During 2011 it was agreed by Federal Council that we should hold a Bosberaad where we would discuss the body politic of the party. This has not happened because only three regions paid the amount agreed upon for running the bosberaad. If we wish to have equal opportunities for all, then all should contribute equally to make the party succeed. We cannot hope to have party running well while some among us want to remain

perpetual parasites that do not want to contribute towards the running of the party. The matter has not been sent to the dust bin yet; the ball is in the court of the regions.

If we wish to pull ourselves of the quagmire of being nobodies we have to set ourselves goals. We know this is unusual to our people but let us agree it cannot be business as usual when the party is fading out of significance..

From where I am standing it is not unreasonable to call on us to have a minimum of 250 000 registered UCDP members by the end of 2013 so that in 2014 we can at least get 750 000 votes that can possibly give us at least 15 seats in the National Assembly. This will then roughly add up to each province having a minimum of 28 000 registered members. This is achievable. We can even get 1 000 000 votes in 2014!

As for details on how this will work, they will be sorted out with the provincial leaders due to be elected.

The UCDP has to undergo metamorphosis not only in name as it has done over the years. This party is after all non-racist. It is non-sexist. It is democratic and should therefore reach out to all nooks and crannies of this country and have rainbow membership.

We must appeal to all women, young and old, all men old and young, all young people employed and unemployed, all young people at school or centre of higher learning or unattached to any centre of learning to give the UCDP a chance. Let them try us to see how hospitable the UCDP is.

{Sizicelela koomama bonke, abatsha nabadala, oobawobonke iingwevu nentsha, kulutsha elusenkomeni nabo bangaphangeliyo, iintsha yonke esezikolweni nasemazikweni emfundo ephakamileyo nabo banga fundiyo bake baphe iUCDP inxhaxheba. Mabasizame babone ukuthi eliligela leUCDP lithanda nokulondoloza abantu ka ngakananina Bazakubona umehluko.}

In mounting business unusual we have to we have to rid ourselves of complacency. We need to get out of our comfort zones. We have to be accountable to the electorate and our members. We who are office bearers and elected representatives must accept that we are not holding these positions because they belong to us. We have to accept that we hold these positions because of the trust endowed on us by the members and the

electorate if we are elected representatives, Members of parliament, or legislatures or councillors.

With that in mind we shall, as business unusual, introduce performance and monitoring mechanisms so that members and the public know how many meetings, how many interventions, how many questions, how many motions and speeches each of the elected representatives have made in their respective houses where they represent us. It cannot be business as usual when our people do not know what is happening in the country.

There is no need for one to remain warming a seat in parliament, legislature or municipal council **re se ke re utlwa gore UCDP ya reng ka ntlha nngwe tota le e seng go tlatsa gore metsotso e nepagetse** (*when we never hear the view of the UCDP on an issue or not even to second the passing of minutes*). There are of course proper legal procedures to follow. One does not just come up and say “go fedile” (it is over). This is part of business unusual but business correct.

To this end our programmes, agendas, contents and debates at meetings will have to be directed towards politics of the day. Our meetings should discuss issues on the national and international agenda and not focus on administrative matters such as discussing who is taking which seat at which legislature all the time.

In mounting business unusual we shall ensure that the party lives up to the five functions of a political party namely:

- a. To keep the public informed on key issues through sharing ideas and stimulating support for them
- b. Monitoring the conduct and performance of our successful candidates or representatives in office
- c. Nominate candidates for office
- d. Provide a basis for the conduct of government and
- e. Act as watchdogs over the conduct of the public business

A rotlhe, borre, bomme le basha re yeng go gasa efangedi ya UCDP mme ba ba dumelang, re ba kwadise (we are building up the temple/party)

We call on all, fathers, mothers and youth to go around spreading the gospel of the United Christian Democratic Party and sing a parody of this chorus:

Ga se ya gago efangedi x 2
Ke ya Morena
Se dule ka yona x 2
E pahatlhalatse

And sing

“Ga se ya gago phathi ena x 2
Ke ya batho
Se dule ka yona x 2
E phasalatse”