



Speech by Comrade Nelson Mandela ANC Rally, Durban, 25 February, 1990



(EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERED)

Friends, comrades, and the people of Natal, I greet you all. I do so in the name of peace, the peace that is so desperately and urgently needed in this region.

In Natal, apartheid is a deadly cancer in our midst, setting house against house, and eating away at the precious ties that bind us together. This strife amongst ourselves wastes our energy and destroys our unity. My message to those of you involved in this battle of brother against brother is this: take your guns, your knives, and your pangas, and throw them into the sea. Close down the death factories. **End this war now!**

We also come together today to renew the ties that make us one people, and to reaffirm a single united strand against the oppression of apartheid. Sihlangene lapha ukuze sibuyisane, sibonisane indlela yokwakha ubumbano olungaphezu kwalolu olukhona manje. Ubumbano lwethu yinsika nesisekelo salomzabalazo wokuphelisa izinhlupheko bobubha okudakwa wucindezelo oluyisitha sethu sonke. Lolucindezelo kanye nodlame oludakwa yilo, singekude uma sihwa, sishayana sodwa.

The people of Natal have fought a long and hard struggle against oppression. The victory of the army of King Cetshwayo kaMpande at the Battle of Isandlwana in 1879 has been an inspiration for those of us engaged in the struggle for justice and freedom in South Africa. At Isandlwana, disciplined Zulu regiments, armed only with shields and spears, but filled with courage and determination, thrust back the guns and cannons of the British imperialists.

When the British finally managed to defeat the Zulu kingdom, they divided it up into thirteen new chiefdoms. Later, they annexed the area and gave the land to white farmers. In 1906, in the reign of Dinuzulu kaCetshwayo, the colonialists introduced the Poll Tax and other regulations designed to force Africans to work for wages on white farms. The Zulu people, led by Chief Bambatha, refused to bow their proud heads and a powerful spirit of resistance developed, which, like the battle of Isandlwana, inspired generations of South Africans.

The ANC pays tribute to these heroic struggles of the Zulu people to combat oppression. And we are very proud that from the ranks of the Zulu people have emerged outstanding cadres of the ANC and national leaders like Dube, Seme, and Lutuli. We remember another son of Natal, the young and talented Communist Party organiser, Johannes Nkosi, who, with three others, was brutally murdered in 1930, when he led a march into Durban to protest the hated pass laws.

Another strand in the struggle against oppression began with the formation, right here in Natal, of the first black political organisation in Africa. The Natal Indian Congress founded in 1894, began a tradition of extra-parliamentary protest that continues into the present. The next decade saw the increasing radicalisation of Indian politics under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

Ngo-1906, ngenkathi uBambatha ehoia amavuyo abomdabu elwa impi yokuchitha ukhandampondwe, abafowethu abadabuka eNdiya beholwa ngu Mahatma Gandhi babelwa impi yokuphelisa ingcindezelo ngaphansi kombuso wama-Ngisi. Ngo-1913 abasebenzi bamaNdiya sibabona beteleka ezimboni zikashukela nezamalahle. Lezizinyathelo zibonisa abantu abacindezelwe eNingizimu Afrika belwa umzabalazo wokuphelisa ukuxhashazwa nokucindezelwa. Lezizinyathelo zaba inselelo ebalulekileyo embusweni wengcindezelo wamaNgisi.

In the passive resistance campaign of 1946, over 2000 Indians went to jail, many for occupying land

reserved for whites. The campaign made clear the common nature of Indian and African oppression, and the necessity of united resistance. In 1947, this led to the Xuma-Naicker-Dadoo Pact, and to the joint action of Africans and Indians in the Defiance Campaign of 1952. We remind the people of Natal of this long and proud tradition of co-operation between Africans and Indians against racial discrimination and other forms of injustice and oppression. Our unity is our defence, and the unmaking of our oppressors. We are extremely disturbed by recent acts of violence against our Indian compatriots. The perpetrators of these acts are enemies of the liberation movement.

The other great struggle in Natal has been that of the workers. In 1926, the Durban branch of the ICU powerfully voiced the grievances of migrant workers on the docks, railways and local industries. In the 1970s Durban workers led the country in a movement to organise and fight for workers' rights. In January 1973, 2000 workers at the Coronation Brick and Tile Factory in Durban came out on strike. They were followed by workers all over Durban.

Out of these strikes grew a host of new unions, new union federations, and eventually, Cosatu, the biggest and most powerful labour organisation in our history. We recognise that battles won in industrial disputes can never be permanently secure without the necessary political changes. Our Defiance Campaign has succeeded in forcing the government to scrap discriminatory laws and has brought us to the point where we are beginning to glimpse the outlines of a new South Africa. The MDM stands as testimony to the powerful alliance of workers and progressive political organisations

Whites, too, have made a contribution to the struggle in Natal. It began with the lonely voices of Bishop Colenso and his daughters who denounced imperialist injustices against the Zulu people and who campaigned vigorously for the freedom of their leaders. The Natal Liberal Party waged a steadfast campaign against removals, and its work has been continued by into the present by people like Peter Brown. Whites also contributed significantly to the resurgence of labour struggles in the 1970s through Wages Commission and the Trade Unions Advisory and Co-ordinating Council. Our struggle has won the participation of every language and colour, every stripe and hue in this country. These four strands of resistance and organisation have inspired all South Africans, and provide the foundations of our struggle today. We salute your proud and courageous history. Akekho namunye umuntu ongazidla aziqhayise ngokulima indima ebonakalayo kulomzabalazo njengabantu baseNatal.

The past is a rich resource on which we can draw in order to make decisions for the future, but it does not dictate our choices. We should look back at the past and select what is good, and leave behind what is bad. The issue of chiefship is one such question. Not only in Natal, but all through the country, there have been chiefs who have been good and honest leaders, who have piloted their people through the dark days of our oppression with skill. These are the chiefs who have looked after the interests of their people, and who enjoy the support of their people. We salute these traditional leaders.

But there have been many bad chiefs who have profited from apartheid and who have increased the burden on their people. We denounce this misuse of office in the strongest terms. There are also chiefs who collaborated with the system, but who have since seen the error of their ways. We commend their change of heart. Chiefly office is not something that history has given to certain individuals to use or abuse as they see fit. Like all forms of leadership, it places specific responsibilities on its holders. As Lutuli, himself a chief, put it, "a chief is primarily a servant of the people. He is the voice of his people."

The Zulu royal house continues today to enjoy the respect of its subjects. It has a glorious history. We are confident that its members will act in ways that will promote the well-being of all South Africans.

The ANC offers a home to all who ascribe to the principles of a free, democratic, non-racial and united

South Africa. We are committed to building a single nation in our country. Our new nation will include blacks and whites, Zulus and Afrikaners, and speakers of every other language. ANC President-General Chief Lutuli said, "I personally believe that here in South Africa, with all of our diversities of colour and race, we will show the world a new pattern for democracy". He said "I think that there is a challenge to us in South Africa, to set a new example for the world". This is the challenge we face today.

To do this we must eliminate all forms of factionalism and regionalism. We praise all organisations which have fought to retain the dignity of our people. Although there are fundamental differences between us, we commend Inkatha for their demand over the years for the unbanning of the ANC and the release of political prisoners, as well as for their stand of refusing to participate in a negotiated settlement without the creation of the necessary climate. This stand of Inkatha has contributed in no small measure to making it difficult for the regime to implement successive schemes designed to perpetuate minority rule.

The 1986 Indaba solution proposed for Natal broke new ground in so far as it addressed the question of the exclusion from political power of the African population of Natal and sought to make regional change pioneer national change. But we are now on the threshold of a very different scenario for national change. We are on the edge of a much greater step forward, for all our people throughout South Africa. There can be no separate solution for Natal under these conditions, nor can it be argued any longer that there is a need. We believe that Inkatha and all the people of Natal would genuinely welcome a unitary, non-racial democratic South Africa, the goals of millions throughout the country. Our call is "one nation, one country". Masibe isizwe esisodwa kumZansi Afrika [ikelele].

Yet even now as we stand together on the threshold of a new South Africa, Natal is in flames. Brother is fighting brother in wars of vengeance and retaliation. Every family has lost dear ones in this strife. In the last few years of my imprisonment, my greatest burden, my deepest suffering, was caused by the reports which reached me of the terrible things which were happening to you people here in Natal. Sonke silahleketwe. Sonke sidabukile. Izinyembezi zenu ngezami. Akwehlanga lungehlanga nina beLembe elega amanye amalemba ngokukhalipha. I extend my condolences to all of you who have lost your loved ones in this conflict. Let us take a moment now to remember the thousands who have died in Natal.

It is my duty to remind you now, in the middle of your great sufferings, of the responsibility which we bear today. If we do not bring a halt to this conflict, we will be in grave danger of corrupting the proud legacy of our struggle. We endanger the peace process in the whole of the country.

Apartheid is not yet dead. Equality and democracy continue to elude us. We do not have access to political power. We need to intensify our struggle to achieve our goals. But we cannot do this as long as the conflict amongst ourselves continues. Vigilantes, thugs and gangs like the notorious Sinyoras, have taken advantage of the hardships experienced by our people to profit and gain for themselves. We can stop them, and the descent into lawlessness and violence only by ceasing our feuds.

Doubts about the role of the police in the conflict continue to jeopardise the finding of a solution. There is an onus on the police to convince the public of their impartiality. The killers of Griffiths and Victoria Mxenge must be brought to book. If there are renegade elements operating within the security forces, they must be exposed and stopped. Justice must not only be done, it must be seen to be done.

We recognise that in order to bring war to an end, the two sides must talk. We are pleased to inform you that we are presently preparing for a meeting in the near future, between ourselves and the present Zulu monarch, King Zwelithini Goodwill kaBhekuzulu. It is my earnest wish that the meeting will establish a basis on which we can build a real peace.

Repeating the call made by Comrade Walter Sisulu at the Conference for a Democratic Future, we extend the hand of peace to Inkatha and hope that it might one day be possible for us to share a platform with its leader, Chief Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi. We recognise the right of all organisations which are not racist to participate in political life. We commend the actions of those who have involved themselves actively in the search for peace in Natal. We commend the joint UDF/COSATU team. We also commend Dr Dhlomo, Dr. Mdalose, and Messrs. Nkheli, Ndlovu and Zondi from Inkatha, as well as the churches in Natal, and certain business sectors, notably the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce. Our search for peace is a search for strength.

As a result of our historic struggles, we, in the Mass Democratic Movement and in the ANC, are the premier political force in the country. This pre-eminence confers on us responsibilities over and above the concerns of power politics. We have a duty to look beyond our own ranks and our immediate concerns. We must strive more earnestly to unite all the people of our country and to nurture that unity into a common nationhood. Wherever divisions occur, such as in the strife here in Natal, it is a reflection against us and our greater societal goals. We need to look critically and candidly at aspects of our own practices which may not be acceptable or wise. We need to be rigorous in identifying our own contribution to the escalation of violence wherever it may occur. We have a greater purpose than the defeat of rival oppressed groups. It is the creation of a healthy and vibrant society.

we condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the use of violence as a way of settling differences amongst our people. Ukuhluthuka kwenhliziyu nodlame kungesakhe isizwe. Funa umbuso wobandlulo usebenzise lokhu njenge sizathu zokuqhubela phambili ingcindezelo.

We would like to see in members of all seasoned political organisations the total absence of intolerance towards those who differ from us on questions of strategy and tactics. Those who approach problems with intolerant attitudes are no credit to the struggle; they actively endanger our future.

The youth have been the shock troops of our struggle. We salute them for the ground which they have gained. Only through commitment have these victories been won; only through discipline can they be consolidated and made to last. Intsha ayibe njengamabutho kaShaka kaSenzangakhona ayelwa izimpi ngesibindi nangobuhlakani. Lamaqhawe ayelandela izwi lezinduna nabaholi. Namunye umphakathi uthi, umhlaba uthi, nami ngithi aluphele udlame. Asingabuswa intukuthelo nokuhluthuka kwezinhliziyu. Our youth must be ready to demonstrate the same perfect discipline as the armies of King Shaka. If they do not, we will lose the ground which we have gained at such great cost.

The parties to the conflict in Natal have disagreed about a great deal. We have reached a stage where none of the parties can be regarded as right or wrong. Each carries a painful legacy of the past few years. But both sides share a common enemy: the enemy is that of inadequate housing, forced removals, lack of resources as basic as that of water, and rising unemployment. The Freedom Charter asserts that there should be houses, security and comfort for all. We demand that the government provides these basic necessities of life.

Ukwesweleka kwezindlu, kwamanzi, kwamathuba emisebenzi, ukufudukiswa ngendluzula kwabantu nokubhidlizwa kwamakhaya abo. Lezi yizinkinga zethu sonke. Lokhu akungakhi ubutha phakathi kwethu. Masifunde isifundo sase-Lamontville ngenkathi bethi "Asinamali" - babeveza izinkinga zawo wonke umphakathi.

It is thus vital that we end the conflict in Natal, and end it now. Everyone must commit themselves to peace. Women of Natal, in the past and at crucial moments, you have shown greater wisdom than your menfolk. It was you who, in 1929 and again in 1959, identified and struck out at one of the roots of our oppression. You launched powerful campaigns around beerhalls. Amakhosikazi akithi

oDorothy Nyembe, oGladys Manzi noRuth Shabane babonisa ukukhalipha kwengqondo ngokuvala izindlu zophuzo ngenkathi amadoda ebulawa ngamanzi amponjwana imindeni ibhidlika. Nginethemba lokuthi azophinde futhi eme ngezinyawo abambisane nomphakathi aqede lesisimo. More recently, the women of Chesterville arranged all-night vigils to protect their children. Mothers, sister and daughters of Natal, it falls to you once again to intervene decisively.

I call on the women of Natal. Wonke uwonke aphonse itshe esivivaneni! I charge you with a special responsibility here today. It is you, in your wisdom now, who must begin the work of bringing peace to Natal. Tell your sons, your brothers, and your husbands, that you want peace and security. It is you who must show them the real enemy. Wonke amakhosikazi ayazi ukuthi isimo lapho amakhaya ikati lilala eziko upahlaluvuza lapho imvula inetha, izingane sibulawa yizifo okudakwa ububha nengcinezelo. Ngakhoke, kufanele siphelise udweshu nokungezwami phakathi kwethu yikhona sizonqoba isitha sethu sonke umbuso wobandlululo. Open the cooking pots and ask them why there is so little food inside. When the rains come into your homes, place the hands of your men in the pools on the floor, and ask them, why? When your child ails, and you have no money to take it to a doctor, ask them, why? There is only one answer, and that answer is our common deprivation. Go out and meet the women of the other side. Their story is the same. Then take your men with you. I want to hear from you. From each and every community, I want a report. I want to hear the story of how you made the peace. We place our trust in you.

Viva our mothers.

Viva our sisters.

Viva the women of our land!

I call on the people of Inanda. Join hands. All of you from Clermont, join hands; Hambanathi, Hammarsdale, Chesterville and Mpophomeni, join hands. People of Ashdown, Esikhaweni, Mbat, and Trustfeed, join hands. Those of you who are from Maphumulo's area, you too. Residents of Durban and Pietermaritzburg, it is your turn. Those from strife-torn Umlazi and tragic KwaMashu, join hands also. I know each one of these names from my time in prison. I know each as an explosion of conflict. And those of you whose homes I have not named, you too should join hands. We are many thousands gathered here in this stadium today. Let us now pledge ourselves to peace and to unity. Join hands all of you and raise them up for all to see.

A great deal of energy has been wasted by our people in violent actions across the towns and villages of this province. If we could channel this energy towards the real enemy of the people, apartheid, we could be free within days.

We have already waited for our freedom for far too long. We can wait no longer. Join forces, Indians, Coloureds, Africans and freedom-loving whites, to give apartheid its final blow. In the process, let us develop active democracy. Democratic structures which serve the people must be established in every school, township, village, factory and farm.

Since my release, I have become more convinced than ever that the real makers of history are the ordinary men and women of our country. Their participation in every decision about the future is the only guarantee of true democracy and freedom. Undue reliance should not be placed on the goodwill of the government. It is still a white-minority regime concerned to protect white minority rights as far as it can. Nor should our reliance be placed on the abilities of the statesmen amongst us and our political leaders to negotiate an acceptable settlement. It is only the united action of you, the people that will ensure that freedom is finally achieved. I call, therefore, for an all-round intensification of our struggle. Siyonqoba simunye!

Mayibuye i-Afrika! Amandla!