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**Interviewer:** All right, we're recording, it's now the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August, we had a previous short little interview but which I don't think came across very well so we're starting again.

Siphiwe, thanks again. If you can just for the record say your full name.

**Siphiwe:** My name is Siphiwe Seratsi Segodi

**Interviewer:** Okay Siphiwe, I'm just going to ask you a few questions about yourself, all that. When and where were you born?

**Siphiwe:** I was born in Orlando East in Soweto in 1974 on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and the places that you have lived, did you use to live in Johannesburg all your life or you have lived in other places?

**Siphiwe:** Well I've spent all my life so far in Johannesburg. From birth to 16 years I stayed in and around Soweto, Orlando and Moletsane. Then from 16 years upwards I've been staying in Thembelihle where I'm still staying today.

**Interviewer:** And since when in Thembelihle?

**Siphiwe:** In Thembelihle I arrived at around 1991.

**Interviewer:** And also just tell me a little bit about your family, your brothers and sisters, your parents? Were you married? Do you have children yourself?

**Siphiwe:** Yes well, my mother is still alive. My mom is Dinah Segodi, she currently stays in Thembelihle even though I'm no longer with her in the same place in terms of the yard. I've got my own stand where I stay with my partner and two kids, a boy, 7 years old and a girl who is now 13-14 months old, I'm just a bit confused but around there - she is still young. Then also I do have a brother and a sister but the brother is the youngest after my younger sister. My sister stays with the mother, my brother more or less stays with my mother but in a separate area I mean in a separate place within the same yard.

**Interviewer:** And just tell me a little bit about your schooling and your education.

**Siphiwe:** I went to primary school in Moletsane, Tshotshololo primary school and then I proceeded to Dikgongpetlahi Primary School and in 1987 I went to Orlando at Bona High

School. I dropped out in around 1991 and then in 1997 I went back to Standard 9, and then in 1998 I completed Standard. 10 in another high school in Orlando.

**Interviewer:** And Standard 10 is much like matric?

**Siphiwe:** Yes, matric.

**Interviewer:** And finally can you give a sense of the kind of work, the jobs that you've done?

**Siphiwe:** Well I've done a variety of jobs. Well I've worked as a petrol attendant in two different garages but with the same name, separate owners. I've worked for a Chinese company which was contracted by the SABC, I can't remember the year but it was a piece job where we were supposed to issue out those letters of demand of payment of TV licences. I've worked for a meat market where we were supplying various butcheries with meat; I've worked a number of odd jobs. I've also worked for a bedding company called Dynamic Bedding; I was employed under an outsourcing company called Capital outsourcing. That's part of the jobs that I've done. But currently I am with the Freedom of Expression Institute [FXI], that's where I'm currently based.

**Interviewer:** What do you do at FXI?

**Siphiwe:** FXI, currently my focus is in a programme, or a project that is under the FXI censorship programme and currently consisting a network of organisations around freedom of expression.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And just tell me a little bit about how you became politically involved, how you became an activist?

**Siphiwe:** Well around the late 80s I remember I joined the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) the student wing at that time. It was then a student organisation at the time and then at a later stage I became a member of the youth wing which was then called Azanian Youth Unity. And at some point immediately after 1994, one became demoralised and I ceased these political activisms as a member due to the

dissatisfaction of the direction that the PAC was taking which, as you know that the PAC was divided into two at some point during that era of negotiations. Some were saying, “No, let’s negotiate and abandon the armed struggle”, some were saying, “No let’s continue with the armed struggle and fast track the process.” So I went along with the group that was saying let’s fast track the process at the time. So when the other group won and took over the negotiation of the peace it became clear at some point that we have lost it and one stopped being active in the PAC up until the beginning of the new era where one went back to PAC looking at the political commission that was moving forward but only to find that the PAC at that time was still running around in circles. They were not moving forward and I found myself getting more involved in my community struggle and we linked somehow with the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC). I remember how we got linked to the SECC, can I..

**Interviewer:** Sure, sure.

**Siphiwe:** It was when we were having one of our activities in the community. We had a march, the march was directed to Masondo but we did not have the resources to get to Masondo so we had planned to meet him at the nearest police station. Then they send the Metro Police guy to come and collect the memorandum there. But fortunately the activity was well covered, in fact I can’t say well covered but the media was involved particularly Truth FM which the organiser of the SECC at that time Bongani Lubisi was listening. Okay, because we were called for an interview later in the day only to find Bongani was listening and we left our contact details. He contacted us to say, “Your struggle is our struggle, can we meet and discuss it?” That’s how we got to link with the SECC, which was already an affiliate of the Anti -Privatisation Forum (APF). So we were also introduced to APF and TCC later became part of the APF.

**Interviewer:** And just tell us briefly about the history of both your community, what kind of community more or less is it and also the formation of the Thembelihle Crisis Committee (TCC) itself, why did it form?

**Siphiwe:** Thembelihle as an area is an informal settlement, I mean shacks, houses and some people built houses with brick and mortar –very few, but it’s an informal settlement which was established in early ‘80s, around the ‘80s, I understand. It began and obviously there was resistance between those who occupied the land and the regime at that time which wanted to move them from there but only to find out when the committee formation began to come in then from the side of the previous regime the ushering in of the new dispensation, you know the Mandela’s and them campaigning to get into power they also saved Thembelihle. I was told; I was not around that time. I was already staying in Thembelihle but when that happened I was not there, they were told that, “This land is yours, you must stay here we will build houses here etc.” So well, we don’t have electricity even though currently we’re engaged in a struggle to do it on our own, Operation Khanyisa, connection individually but formally we don’t have electricity from the authorities. We had to connect water on our own because the only thing that they managed to do for us was to put communal taps. But sometime around ‘97 I think, people began to organise themselves and went into the streets and got materials and put all those materials to get water into their yards. So I can say 99% of people in Thembelihle due to that direct action of theirs, do have water in their yards. Even though there is still a problem of pressure when the other area is using water the other area won’t have enough water at some point. That’s what it is but in terms of education, well, we had to win a struggle of having the Indian community, because you remember that Thembelihle it’s an area which is surrounded by Indians and Malawians due to the areas laws so this thing we had to fight to get our children to schools but in terms of education there is access to primary and secondary school for children which they go to. And then

also, well, there have been various organisations in Thembelihle in trying to advance the struggle of Thembelihle to become a proper township or to at least enjoy the basic services as promised ... when, during the first elections, or when the new government came to power that we would enjoy electricity etc. We met various conditions along the way but in 2000-2001, TCC was formed, actually it was inspired by SECC, at that time. SECC was connecting electricity for people of Soweto who were disconnected because they couldn't pay. So in Thembelihle what happened is that the people who formed TCC had the belief, had this idea that we need to form an organisation that will make sure that we get electricity in Thembelihle, that was the main purpose of the commission of TCC which I joined at a very early stage of its formation and also bought the idea that we need to use the commission to fight for electricity. But as time goes by it became clear that, well, why not fight for all ... water, housing and so forth? So currently that's what TCC is fighting for, to get it all there.

**Interviewer:** And you mentioned that your introduction to the SECC was also your introduction to the APF? So ... I'm assuming that you joined as a community affiliate of the APF, is that right?

**Siphiwe:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Just take us through a little bit from that stage, from coming from a local level and then hooking up with other organisations both in Soweto as well as the APF - how did that impact and shape the kinds of things that began to happen in TCC, in Thembelihle, what you were doing, how you went about doing it?

**Siphiwe:** Yes, well I must say that the idea the idea of firstly...you know sometimes when you're in the struggle there is that idea or that politics of saying, "No we must fight our own fight!" but when we began to link up with other struggles it became clear that, it is not our struggle but there are struggles that we need to link with and I must mention that the question of solidarity, it became clear that it is very, very important. Because I

remember when various activities happened in Thembelihle, we'd have...I must say that people from Soweto will come and visit our mass meetings where they'll also give their side of the story, their sufferings and then the people of Thembelihle will also realise that they are not alone in their suffering, there are other people and who are interested in supporting us, we had joint support in supporting us. So I must say there was a lot of sharing of experiences in struggle and that said, a lot in us becoming bold and being able to face the Councillor because you know sometimes the Councillor is with certain members of the police and what have you but I must say we learnt a lot from SECC. At the time it had a campaign that said, the SECC had a campaign that said, "Fire the Councillor, Fire the Mayor" and we also go to the Councillor with that campaign because we realised that the immediate cause of our problem at that time was the Councillor so we need to direct our anger to him.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Looking at the APF side, the APF as an organisation brings a number of different communities together in the initial phases of the membership of the APF in the early 2000's when there was a lot of large scale mobilisation and events like the WSSD and these kinds of things. How did that impact on Thembelihle in terms of its struggles and also in terms of its development?

**Siphiwe:** Okay, I must say that even that on its own, looking at the leadership of TCC but a number of people of Thembelihle to various struggles and ... to a certain extent it gave some hope to see some kind of unity that we at some point, okay at that time it seemed like very like soon, which was sufficient to shape things as they are. So I remember due to WSSD, I remember in Thembelihle six or seven buses were asked, the WSSD, the kind of mobilisation you know and so I must say that it began to organise people, mobilise people towards some kind of a goal.

**Interviewer:** And then talk a little bit about once that was established and you began your campaigns, what actually happened? Did struggles and fights begin to happen in Thembelihle as a result of your mobilisations?

**Siphiwe:** As a result of our mobilisations we managed to resist when the Johannesburg City Council attempted to move our area to some kilometres away, we managed to resist as a community united but also due to the unity that we had through the APF and other organisations that we were working with at that time. We managed also to get quick information and resources on how to secure legal representation and opinions on the matter, which I think became very important for us. But also during that conversation, we also managed to kick out the Councillor from the area that used to be a stronghold of the ANC, they could do what they liked there but after that period we kicked off the Councillor and the best... I mean there was a shifting move, I mean the political landscape shifted a bit which I believe is due to the strength that we got from external forces which we were linked with like APF. Well I suppose I can talk about APF in terms of its support both via education, educating us with regard to policies, with regard to rights, with regard to a number of issues, privatisation, its strength as a policy and its impact to the poor etc. but, also as an organisation how to do things. So there is a lot of strength that we drew as Thembelihle from the APF.

**Interviewer:** How - or is it the same or always been the same - ) is the TCC structured in terms of it's leadership? Is there basically anyway that you can join? Tell us about how it is structured?

**Siphiwe:** TCC currently it has got an executive committee of six and it has a general meeting, which sits every Saturday at 11am. The Executive committee sits ad-hoc because the most important meeting is the general meeting but TCC also calls mass meetings whenever is necessary. Anyone can join TCC; we have not very long



developed membership forms, which are still issued for free. That's how TCC is structured currently.

**Interviewer:** You mentioned initial struggles through the SECC and APF but you also began to work with other organisations. What other organisations did you work with as well and why did you work with them?

**Siphiwe:** Well we're now linked with a whole range of other social movements. For example, we had to work with the LPM [Landless Peoples Movement] because in our community what happened at one point is that the chairperson of the TCC split the TCC but some of us we agreed to preserve TCC. And after that we decided that we're not going to compete with this new splinter group but we have to find ways of incorporating it. And now we remember that LPM is not a local organisation but it was regional ... so we had to work with it from various forms, there were other branches of LPM and other bases that we found ourselves cooperating with closely together. Then also I must say that also we also got to learn from other NGOs about other issues of energy. There is one that's called Earthlife and also Jubilee and sometimes we supported, as the TCC we supported their protest at Shell garage somewhere along Bara Road so there would be that relationship and cooperation with our organisation from people of taking the struggle forward.

**Interviewer:** As things developed in those struggles, what would you describe as the main objectives that came from the TCC? You mentioned that you resisted a potential eviction that probably was a little bit more than an immediate struggle that was taking place. How did you develop objectives, how did the TCC develop objectives; what were you struggling for on an overall basis?

**Siphiwe:** Maybe you can rephrase the question so that I understand.

**Interviewer:** As opposed to just being an organisation that responds to crisis, did you develop objectives? Sort of like long-term objectives - this is what we're fighting for, this

is why we're fighting for these things as the TCC as opposed to just saying, they're trying to evict us, let's resist.

**Siphiwe:** No, its true, what happened along the way like I'm saying is we got exposed to various organisations and obviously various ideas and ideologies and we began in our search, I mean as TCC we endorsed socialism as one form of ideology and a vision which we align ourselves with. So in our struggles we are also guided currently by that vision to say the issue is not about us being evicted here or us getting houses, it won't end up there as long as capitalism still exists, you'll get other challenges because as there are some other people who have benefited in our neighbouring area 2 kilometres away; where they have built houses but they are facing new challenges. Like the challenge of capitalism, prepaid water, prepaid electricity, there are various new challenges that they are facing. So we developed an idea of saying we need to fight for a change of the system. Even though understanding is not at the same level but that's what the TCC at some point undertook.

**Interviewer:** And the concrete demands that you've put forward as an organisation, practical demands?

**Siphiwe:** Well besides those that affect us directly as a community, I must say that we've now developed certain demands, except those that affect us because currently obviously our demands are for those basic services that we want. But we've been supporting other demands, which are made by other organisations like the APF, which we think, will also have a positive effect to us.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And just give me a sense of the tactics that the TCC has employed in its struggle besides the practical activities you've currently engaged in the community on the ground as far as you campaigns and your struggles?

**Siphiwe:** I think we have tried by all means to always rely on mass action. I think that has been our major component or strategy. But as I've already indicated, we've used

lawyers where necessary; I mentioned earlier that we had to fight for access to education. I remember that we got involved with Khaya Centre for Popular Studies, we got some workshops around policies on education which capacitated a number of our members to be able to fight for this thing. But also as part of Thembelihle, at some point the JCC wanted to launch a case against the community and then withdrew an order to fight us and fight the case. But more I think we have been using marches, t-shirts. And currently we're connecting electricity on our own and we're winning the struggle. Unfortunately it's just that the power is weak but in terms of the struggle I think due to mass mobilisation and I think we're winning the struggle.

**Interviewer:** In other words what you're saying is that there have been advances, there has been victories as a result of those struggles.

**Siphiwe:** Yes, there have been victories.

**Interviewer:** Give me a sense of how the state has responded at various points to the kinds of struggles and activities undertaken by the TCC?

**Siphiwe:** Well it differs, sometimes obviously, but most of the times obviously harshly because what will happen is that when we occupy land... for example, when some people are moved to a certain area there will be spaces and we decide as an organisation, but we consult with the broader community and then the community will say, 'No we are going to occupy this area where people have been moved because we're not going anywhere until we're satisfied that the reasons are valid.' And after that they will send in the Metro Police, the Red Ants to come and demolish the new shacks. But also recently when we were organising our "Operation Khanyisa", the same thing happened. The same thing in 2003 actually when we started "Operation Khanyisa", for the first time it was in 2003, they sent in police with City Power to come and cut it. We couldn't resist at that time but this time around in 2010 we launched that campaign, we decided that we need to do it in numbers and the community responded positively and

when they came they found that we could resist. Even though they cut but they could not do it in each and every household they left it halfway and after that we're continuing with our "Operation Khanyisa". Also I must say that there has been attempts buy out or to get some of the comrades off through co-option...

**Interviewer:** What kind of co-option? What are they doing?

**Siphiwe:** Obviously they'll give some jobs, others they incorporate to leadership ranks and then obviously give them free houses. For example, there is one female comrade by the name of Brenda, she is currently in Legae, I mean the way it happened it was clear to everyone. It was clear co-option. She was coerced into the leadership of the ANC, she left sometime and she was given a house in Eastly. Recently our Deputy Chairperson, some 3-4 months back was given a position of CEO without proper procedures and was strong in terms of articulating issues and pushing.... she was moved from the struggle side to the CEO offices. And again our Secretary comrade Ghetto was followed at night and told that tomorrow Johannesburg Road Agency is hiring people. So the councillor phoned him directly and wanted to give him a job. That morning fortunately I passed there when I was going to the district office and I found many people there which proved that there was some employment opportunity there. But obviously he was just going to put him via the back doors but as comrades knowing our positions and principles we came out and said this is the situation, we're not going to... so I'm saying it happens, sometimes we don't know some of the things that happen but that's what been happening, undermining the leaders via such things.

**Interviewer:** And how have challenges like that, I mean, the state trying to co-opt and buy people off but also some of the repression and also the new politics within the ANC over the last two years - how has that impacted on the struggle amongst ordinary people and your membership?

**Siphiwe:** Yes, I must say that somewhere somehow it has affected the struggle a lot because once you stand in front of the community and talk, they will point out and say, "But you guys you're saying this today but tomorrow you're on the other side". I was just making an example with Brenda but there are a number people who have been...so from the side of the community it reduces confidence on the leadership but also with repression in particular, where force is used, you find out when we call for marches, direct mass action it takes time for us to reach a conclusion because we have to debate and say there will be shooting, there will be that and that. So it also makes things very difficult. Sometimes we even lose positions when it comes to taking mass action because some people feel that, "But we don't want to go, we're going to get arrested". So, I must say that it has affected and I think somehow if it wasn't for such action, I believe the TCC will be very much stronger than it is now.

**Interviewer:** And what about the latest politics in the ANC, the coming to power of Zuma, a different kind of message that he's given to people and democracy, has that impacted at all?

**Siphiwe:** Yes, it has because some people even though we've discussed these things but you know some people they believe in seeing. Because I remember you find that in our meetings some of our members they come with those...I can't remember the number, there is this toll free number to Zuma, and they say, "Comrades we've got Zuma's hotline number". So somehow people they began to believe that Zuma will do something better, you know. There is that confidence and that on its own has affected the struggle somehow. But also due to the fact that we are struggling with the ANC as a community I must say that in particular with electricity struggle is the one that, because we're doing it on our own as a community is the one that somehow pulls the TCC together again - but there are challenges.

**Interviewer:** Can you speak to those; I mean you've spoken a lot about the external challenges around the environment and all that. Can you speak of some of the internal challenges outside of coercion from the state or from the ANC because all movements have been facing some of those challenges and problems? In TCC what's your experience there?

**Siphiwe:** Internally?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Siphiwe:** Well, internally I mean there is this, well firstly the issue of deployment. You find that most of the members left alone, you find that the leadership itself is unemployed. SECC took the position at some point that we are not going to be trying to have lots of money as an organisation, we took a position to say we need to avoid that but we'll have to find ways of getting money whenever we need to use that. So TCC is some kind of, I must say a poor organisation. So as a result of unemployment from people you find that some of the tasks are not performed due to ...you find that the time a certain task was supposed to be performed, someone got a piece job somewhere and they had to run and do that job. But also ...that's one challenge.

**Interviewer:** What about leadership? And I'm just going here from looking at some of the challenges that have happened within, let's say, even the APF for example, where there is always a challenge of replacing leadership and those kind of things as well as accountability, those kinds of things.

**Siphiwe:** I must say Dale that with regard to leadership, I think we're in our third year now without having ... we've been saying that we need to have an AGM. I think that's one point that...but also within the organisation you'll find that it seems there is fear of change, you know, "when so and so leaves things won't be well..." But we're trying by all means to always say, "No, it is not about so and so, it is about all. We need to capacitate all of us to make sure that we control our organisation." But in terms of accountability I

think we have been trying our level best to account as much as possible. As I've indicated we've avoided many executive meetings so that most of the decisions that are made are made in a broader meeting. It's a general meeting basically, from general meeting we go out to a mass meeting if we don't ...if there is a need sometimes you find out that there is something that really needs to go out to the community and that's where the final decision is made. But most of our decisions are made at the general meeting. So I must say that's where they put in a lot even if the executive does meet and there is something that we've adopted and they trust that we've performed they put it forward to that general meeting. So in terms of accountability currently even though there are new developments now but I'm hoping that we'll not come across problems. But they have not been very big problems.

**Interviewer:** What would you say as the TCC and as an activist in Thembelihle and having been a member of the APF from almost since it began or fairly soon after it began, what would you identify as then main...you've already mentioned in early years some of the pluses, the positives of being exposed to and being part of the APF ... what would you say are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the APF from the community perspective, as a community affiliate?

**Siphiwe:** Maybe one weakness I think from the APF, I think was that of the APF not put more effort in making sure that it builds its affiliates and make sure that ... I think that's what I identified as a weakness from the APF. Not much effort even though others will come to the APF and be capacitated but maybe some organisers of the APF should go to the affiliates to make sure that structures and organisations are functional. I think that's one point that APF didn't do much on even though APF will give support for communities to do that but in terms of making sure that happens I think there was little that was done. But one strength of the APF I think most importantly is that of, APF united

various organisations from different parts of Gauteng in particular and that on its own, I mean is strengthening the member organisations and APF itself and...

**Interviewer:** Throughout the time that TCC has been a member of APF, what has been TCC's exposure to the international side of the struggle, not only necessarily just purely community or South African based and if so, how has that impacted on the community struggles themselves?

**Siphiwe:** Well I know that through APF, TCC did become exposed to international struggles, e.g. WSSD on its own it was one of those but also social forums, we were part of that. And also I know that sometime, if you remember very well, we would go to ...okay I remember some members of TCC took some people to Rosebank, one comrade was asked that you remind me of those people that were talking about us in various parts of the world, Mozambique but also somewhere in Europe etc. So to a certain extent, I must say that also showed that the struggle is not only about SA but there is struggle that's going on around the world. But then how it impacted in particular I can't say, I'm not sure ...

**Interviewer:** When I said the impact, I meant did it, in any way, change people's perspectives of their own struggles and made them adopt certain different kinds of ways of approaching things?

**Siphiwe:** Do you want me to talk about them, I mean benefit?

**Interviewer:** I don't mean resources those kinds of things.

**Siphiwe:** Yes it did.

**Interviewer:** Just a last couple of questions. Given all the problems, the challenges, there is a lot of things that have happened during the last twelve years and where TCC is at now; first of all do you see a continued role for TCC as you said earlier that as long as the situation remains they'll still be a need, and what role in the future, if you look into the future, is it the same as it has been in the past or is it changing? I mean the role of



the TCC, you were born out of a particular context and you have been struggling for particular things. Have those fundamentally shifted? Have they changed? Have they remained the same?

**Siphiwe:** I think there has been an evolution somehow because as I've already indicated that when it was formed at first it was for purely electricity but as time goes on, it became clear that there's a need to look at other needs in the community, water, housing, etc. But as time goes on, it became clear that we need to struggle in solidarity with other struggles including workers. I remember TCC we used to... there is a shop by Checkers where workers were...some few years back there was a big Shoprite\ Checkers strike where comrades who organised themselves walked from Thembelihle, about 6,5-7 kilometres to Lens to go and support those workers. And workers themselves said, "No you can't walk back home" and they organised transport. So it's just that there is a need also currently to clarify politics within TCC itself, you know, I think that is important because once politics are not clear there is a lot of confusion there will be either stagnant or at the end of the day the organisation will diminish. But due to the introduction of politics I think, we as TCC we managed to identify other struggles, which we need to be involved in and align ourselves with

**Interviewer:** If you were to look and say, TCC has been in existence now for almost a decade - you've mentioned now that you've achieved certain things - if you look at the situation that you're in right now, what kind of things do you think still need to happen in order for that struggle to be taken forward on those different fronts within Thembelihle?

**Siphiwe:** I think there still needs to be maximum unity in the struggle within Thembelihle itself. There is still a long way to go, the struggle is still...we're still far from reaching our goals as a community, not TCC in particular. So I think we need to organise more members as TCC and as I've indicated capacitate our members so that people are clear

about issues so that the organisation can function accordingly. Yes, clarify our programme.

**Interviewer:** Do you still see a role even given... and one has to be honest about this and say in the last 2-3 years the APF has shown quite a lot of weaknesses ...do you still see a role for an organisation like the APF in being part of that?

**Siphiwe:** Well, it's just unfortunate that as you have already correctly pointed out, about the APF being weak and it's not a good thing to see as you said. But yes, I think we still need some form of an APF. I think if possible the APF on its own still has a role to play in terms of coordinating the struggles such as those of Thembelihle but also other areas. It's just unfortunate that, yes ...

**Interviewer:** Is there anything that I haven't asked you that you think is important? I'm trying to get a broad history and context of the community organisations. What would you like to say?

**Siphiwe:** I must indicate that in the previous elections, local elections, it happened that SECC became part of ...well there were contestations within the APF about what to do, here are elections, what are we doing? There were various positions and in the end I think the last position, yes I think, the last, APF said it's up to communities to decide what is for the best to do in the elections. And we became part of an initiative called, Operation Khanyisa Movement, where some of the organisations that were part of APF - some not all of them - formed Operation Khanyisa to contest elections. Well our understanding of contesting the elections was cleared, I'm not sure but I hope not all because we were discussing these issues to say, "We're not contesting the elections to say the Councillor is going to change our situation but it was for the purpose of saying we need to be there, I mean we can't be there all along, come one day for elections we fold our arms and say let them do their own things, but we need to be there on the day, we need to challenge them. But also we made sure that the Councillor him\herself will

be...I mean we tried by all means to put strict controlling mechanisms. But I must say that the experience...it's just unfortunate that just after that period I began working almost regularly. Immediately after 2007 I got a number of jobs which demanded most of my time and from the reports and from the little experience that I got, I must say that it became clear that the councillors on their own, I mean you can't elect a councillor based on trust and say, "We trust Dale and our life will change, we trust Sipiwe as our leader in Thembelihle and things will change". I mean that's one experience that I hope that most of members of Operation Khanyisa did pick up ... because there were a number of things which should not have been in that situation. But also when it comes to...you know there were secrets, a number of things that were said by the councillor, trying to avoid the mandate, but worse when floor cross time came, someone was preparing herself to cross the floor but fortunately our control mechanism couldn't allow for that. We managed to pull her down and replaced. I'm going to be following very closely with the new councillor, I don't have much knowledge of what's happening and there were a number of things that also affected our participation as TCC, but it's part of the struggle.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

