

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

Chief Albert Luthuli House, 9th Floor, 54 Pixely, Johannesburg 2001 P.O Box 61884, Marshalltown 2107

T: +2711 376 1000 F: +2711 376 1000 www.anc1912.org.za



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

16 MARCH 2020

STATEMENT OF THE EXTENDED SESSION OF THE NATIONAL WORKING COMMITTEE ON COVID 19 PANDEMIC, PRESENTED BY ANC OFFICIALS

The National Working Committee of the African National Congress sat in an extended session on 16 March 2020, to consider organisational responses to the COVID19 Pandemic and South Africa's responses.

The NWC welcomed the decisive measures announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa on 15 March 2020, declaring a national disaster to enable South Africa to take the necessary measures to stop the pandemic. The ANC appreciated the introduction of restrictions on flights from affected countries, the closing of a large number of border posts; and encouraging the testing and self-isolation by citizens who travelled to and from affected countries in the last few weeks.

The other measures to stop the pandemic will require the cooperation and involvement of all South Africans, to prevent the spread of the COVID19. This includes the early closure of schools on 18 March 2020, with the educational authorities helping schools to ensure that children have sufficient homework during this period; and engagements with higher education institutions on appropriate responses.

The ANC calls on all institutions and all sectors, public and private, to adhere to the restrictions on public gatherings. In this regard the NEC has suspended until further notice, all its Branch General Meetings and Branch AGMs, Regional and Provincial meetings and conferences of the ANC and the Leagues, as well as other planned large activities, such as the unity conference of former Umkhonto we Sizwe combatants that was supposed to take place this weekend. It will also include the postponement of the National General Council of the ANC, since this was planned for the winter months of July-August 2020.

Although no large gatherings will be held, ANC branch executive committees (BECs) are still required to meet, play an active role in helping the local communities to respond to the pandemic. The social mobilization should include educating communities about COVID19, how to prevent it through regular washing of hands, social distance, not shaking hands, not spreading droplets when sneezing or coughing by using your arm; and keeping cultural meetings such as funerals and weddings very small, during this period of national disaster.

Our branches are also called to work with local health authorities, community development workers, parliamentary constituency offices and local government, including ward councillors, so that they can provide information about the local testing sites and clinics in each district and municipality. We must accelerate local outreach and bring together all different sectors in local communities – NGOs and CBOs, faith-based, cultural, sports and other organisations. This includes door to door work so that no vulnerable family or persons fall through the crack.

Provincial and Regional Executive Committees and offices are required to support this process; and the ANC national office will provide mass and social media information to support this work.

The new online ANC Membership Management system and the ANC Cloud allow the ANC to communicate with all its members on these critical tasks, including direct online communications between branch secretaries and members in a ward. Because the ANC membership system and ANC Cloud do not require direct contact, we will continue to use it as an instrument for renewal, and to mobilise ANC members in the service on this war on COVID19.

The NWC also received a detailed briefing on the measures to track infections, to do contact tracing and to capacitate the health system to deal with the pandemic. Although there is no treatment at the moment, there are South African scientists working with the WHO on possible vaccine trials.

PRESIDENT CM Ramaphosa	DEPUTY PRESIDENT DD Mabuza	NATIONAL CHAIRPERSON G Mantashe	SECRETARY GENERAL ES Magashule	DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL JY Duarte	TREASURER GENERAL P Mashatile
----------------------------------	--------------------------------------	---	--	--	---

Twitter: @MYANC / Facebook: @MyANC
Instagram: @myanc_ / YouTube: MyANC

THE YEAR OF UNITY, SOCIO-ECONOMIC, RENEWAL AND NATION BUILDING

#Khawuleza

#BeTheRenewal

The NWC notes the dedication and commitment of health workers across the country, in the public, military and private sectors. Being on the frontline of the war on the pandemic, they are most at risk, and the NWC urged the National Command Council to put in place special measures to ensure the safety and protection of our cadre of health workers in country. As we face this national disaster, the need for a health compact, with all stakeholders in the public and private health systems at the centre, are even more critical than before.

The President briefed the meeting about the fiscal and monetary measures being considered, to enable the country to weather the ongoing economic crisis that is now being compounded by the global COVID19 pandemic. Government ministers are consulting with labour and business, including banks and insurance institutions, as well as tourism sector on effective responses as a country. All employers are also urged to put in place measures to protect their workforces.

The public transport system - trains, taxis and busses, as well as taxi and bus ranks and train stations - are key areas of social contact, and government must work with the transport sector to come up with measures to protect commuters.

The National Working Committee shared the concerns by its government, about the gravity of an explosion in infections for our nation. We must therefore not allow panic, continue to refer to reputable sources of information, and be resolute and focused. We must all put shoulder to wheel to prevent the situation reaching explosive levels.

The declaration of a national disaster is timely, and the NWC supports the use all the measures necessary to deal with this potential public health disaster that we face. The NWC notes that if the situation further deteriorates, more stringent measures may be required, and urge Cabinet to swiftly take the necessary steps allowed by our Constitution, for the sake of our nation.

ISSUED BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, CDE ACE MAGASHULE

Enquiries:

Pule Mabe, National Spokesperson
071 623 4975