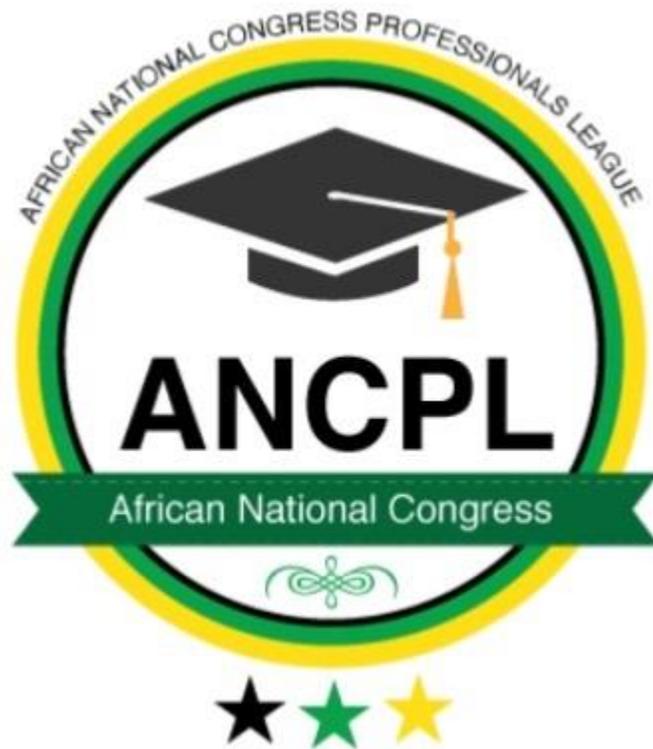


TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ANC PROFESSIONALS' LEAGUE





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A. Context

1. In its pursuit to maintain a stronghold on its critical role as the leader of society, the African National Congress, must continuously and rigorously interrogate its strategy and organisational design against their ability to engage, service and leverage every stratum of society. In its current mode of operations, the ANC has consistently been found wanting in its responsibilities of addressing the needs of a very strategic stratum of society, the professionals.
2. Since the 1994, the number of highly educated individuals in South Africa continue to grown dramatically. Scholars and journalists have described the group as exercising increasing influence over cultural values and public affairs. The rise of this putative "new class" has been greeted either with idealistic hope or ideological suspicion on both the right and the left. The distinctive politics and values of the professional stratum are progressively becoming a motive force that influences lifestyle decisions and political preferences of others in our society. The opinions of a young graduate in a rural or township community are often valued more than the other young men and women who have not acquired a qualification.
3. The failure to establish a compelling and constitutional structure within the ANC to accommodate the peculiar needs and address the challenges of professionals does not serve the interests of the ANC itself, because the noble vision of creating an equal and prosperous society requires capable and highly educated activists to drive its implementation across different spheres of society, in an organized and scientific manner, that delivers a better life for all. In consolidating hegemony, as a necessary basis for continuing to advance the vision of the People's Congress, professionals working in corporate, academia, government and civil society must do so with a deep-rooted and shared commitment to accelerate transformation, decolonize society and significantly improve the human condition of the ordinary man, wherever they exert influence and authority. Without an organisational model to consistently engage and continuously conscientise professionals, this influential and strategic block is left poorly utilized.
4. The inability to fulfill its duties of servicing this strategic stratum, puts the party at risk of being at the receiving end of animosity from a very capable block of our

society. The ad hoc summits and gala dinners the ANC hosts with professionals, are in the main, a waste of resources and precious time, and should be abandoned in pursuit of establishing a fully-fledged Professionals League. While from time to time, the party has been able to leverage on various progressive associations and forums of professionals, this arrangement is erratic, and reliant on individuals leading these structure, who may be from other political parties in certain instances and this may limit the ANC's ability to access particular professional groups.

5. The necessity for a new league of professionals within the African National Congress is aptly captured in the words of the late President Thomas Sankara, ***“You cannot carry out fundamental change without a certain amount of madness. In this case, it comes from nonconformity, the courage to turn your back on the old formulas, the courage to invent the future. It took the madmen of yesterday for us to be able to act with extreme clarity today. I want to be one of those madmen. ... We must dare to invent the future”.***
6. The renewal agenda cannot take place under the same paradigm, and organisational arrangements that necessitated it. Significant change in our organisational design, daily operations and even rhetoric must define this new phase in our movement. The same slogans that brought us here cannot take us to the next victory. The leagues that brought us here cannot take us to the next level alone. The ANC Professionals' League is a necessary spoke in our wheel to advance the journey of a better life for all.
7. The greatest challenge for any liberation movement is that in achieving its concerted endeavour of creating a free society for all, it produces a new generation of liberated individuals who are beneficiaries of the new order, but who gradually cease to identify with both the basis and the rhetoric of the former struggle which led to the free society they now enjoy.
8. While they may, from time to time, hold the liberation movement in high regard for delivering political freedom, in their liberated thinking, the off-springs of the formerly oppressed do not feel obliged to maintain blind loyalty to their liberators. In fact, with progress in the maturity of the democracy and the freedom attained, the relevance of the liberation movement is assessed in the current context and in relation to prevailing material conditions of the day.
9. The inability to metamorphosize simultaneously or even ahead of the society it creates, puts the liberation movement at risk of being relegated to irrelevance and confronted with decreasing electoral support. In fact, once democracy has been established, and the multi-party system institutionalized, it becomes necessary to shed the liberation garment and acquire new couture stitched with the fabric of the material conditions of the day. Fixed obsession with the history of

liberation credentials limits the ability to understand the reality of the day and threatens the possibility of governing in the future. This is a critical challenge that has confronted liberation movements across the globe and the Tripartite Alliance is no different in this regard.

10. The African National Congress must, primarily, acknowledge that the emergence of an ever growing number of professionals in South Africa is a direct outcome of the Freedom Charter and all associated initiatives across the MDM aimed at “opening the doors of learning for all”. It should then follow that, as the organisation that is responsible for the production of professionals, the ANC must design and create a pragmatic platform to engage, service and leverage this strategic stratum in order to remain relevant to all sections of our society.
11. Similarly, the ANC, must not be oblivious to the hostility that highly educated individuals tend to endure in many branches across the country due to various reasons, which include, amongst others, being seen as a threat, rather than as a healthy and necessary competition in power contestations with members who are less educated. This hostility leads to apathy amongst professionals and they gradually become less engaged in party politics which further extends to reduced turn out during elections.
12. There is also consistent propaganda created to perpetuate the impression that educated people do not necessarily prefer the ANC, and that our voter base remains largely rural and outside the city centres where key influences about the direction of society reside. Nothing could be further from the truth, however, the ANCPL presents the party with demonstrable base to demystify this lie and continue to make education fashionable and reaffirm the ANC as much a home for highly educated individuals as it is a home for the ordinary masses of our people.

B. Triangular Objectives of the ANC Professionals’ League

1. **Objective 1:** To deepen the agenda of the ANC through providing scientific and evidence-based mechanisms to implement the organization's nine aims and objectives across the whole of society. – **The Implement Objective**
2. **Objective 2:** To address professional and labour needs, and challenges facing professionals, and deal with the slow pace of “qualitative transformation” within corporate South Africa. – **The Serve & Defend Objective**
3. **Objective 3:** To consolidate a highly educated skills base and provide a confluence for innovative intelligentsia to advance the agenda of the African National Congress; and position the cosmopolitan outlook of professionals as

leverage for advancing the vision of a truly non-racial South Africa. – **The Recruit Objective**

4. Beyond the traditional subcommittees of the ANC which all structures and leagues are expected to established, the ANCPL will establish dedicated work streams:

a. The Implement Objective: To deepen the agenda of the ANC through providing scientific and evidence-based mechanisms to implement the organization's nine aims and objectives across the whole of society

- i. Notwithstanding the possibility of a third force involvement, the service delivery challenges confronting some of the ANC-governed municipalities undermines the party's vision of creating a better life for all and this undesirable situation prolongs poverty and inequality for masses of our people who have no other option but to depend on the state. These service delivery inefficiencies are not only having a negative impact on society alone but are rapidly scarring the image of the ANC as a movement of the people, and threatening the party's support at the polls. The skills necessary to advance service delivery in ANC municipalities can be sourced directly from the ANCPL on volunteer basis and ensure that the efficiency we see in the private sector where most of these professionals' work is also extended to ANC municipalities.
- ii. The leadership of the ANC has often raised the urgent challenge of securing highly skilled staff for the administration of Luthuli House and Provincial Offices. The fundamental difficulty is related to the salary scales required to attract these much needed skilled personnel at full time basis and the party is not able to compete with conglomerates whose bigger purses enables them to offer much greener pastures. The ANCPL presents an incredible solution to this challenge through establishing a "Sessional Programme" which will place different professionals within the offices of the movement to assist with administration on volunteer basis. This Sessional Programme will also extend to branch level and facilitate a highly-efficiently-run movement.
- iii. Credible research requires a critical mass of intellectuals. All policies and other research programmes of the movement can benefit extensively from a league of professionals who are at the coalface of various thematic areas under study, be it health, education, housing, economics, mining etc. In fact, some professionals are involved in diverse research projects in their daily jobs and this experience and body of knowledge can be extended to improve the work of the ANC, both as party and as government. The current

situation of inviting random experts, with unconfirmed ideological subscriptions, puts our movement at risk of negative influences.

b. The Serve & Defend Objective: To address professional and labour needs, and challenges facing professionals, and deal with the slow pace of "qualitative transformation" within corporate South Africa

- i. In the context of a class struggle within a capitalist society such as South Africa there is labour and capital, period. There is no in between. However young professionals have a distorted tendency not to view themselves as labour and yet they obviously own no means of production. Professionals are wage earners like any other worker in the system. They may be highly skilled labour, but labour nonetheless. The paucity or absence of labour unions which deal with challenges facing professionals such as engineers, accountants, lawyers, pilots and many others, exposes these individuals to some of the worst forms of exploitation and discrimination, and this allows perpetuation of an untransformed corporate South Africa.
- ii. The ANCPL seeks to position itself as the eye of the needle through which corporate South Africa must pass the thread of its transformation agenda with a key focus on both quantitative and qualitative issues.
- iii. As a vanguard for professionals, the ANCPL will provide advocacy for existing policies that are geared towards creating equity in the employment environment, propose necessary reforms as dictated by material conditions and confront companies and bosses who remain adamant to delay the trans-formation agenda of this country because of their strong hold on the economy.
- iv. The road to becoming a professional is laden with multiple challenges especially at the educational level and amongst these is the gross racial and gender discrimination in post graduate programmes within South African universities. In our country today there are professional specialties that remain a conclave for a specific race or a particular gender. While we recognize the positive role played by SASCO and ANCYL in dealing with student matters in general, there are critical limitations, however, in addressing post-graduate challenges primarily because most student leaders are undergraduates during their tenure in office, and also since some post graduate programmes are accessed through the working

environment and thus are not intrinsically linked to the regular student life which is under the influence of the SRC's. The ANCPL is well positioned in this regard to deal with all forms of discrimination that exist within the sphere of post-graduate training.

- v. To offer insightful support and quality servicing of the membership, this area of focus will be segmented into specific sectors, eg Financial Services, Legal, Engineering, Healthcare etc.

c. The Recruit Objective: To consolidate a highly educated skills base and provide a confluence for innovative intelligentsia to advance the agenda of the African National Congress; and position the cosmopolitan outlook of professionals as leverage for advancing the vision of a truly non-racial South Africa

- i. During the years of the struggle the movement was able to rally multi-racial support through the plight for human rights and this multi-racial character even found itself as a critical commitment within the Freedom Charter. Additionally, the racial profile of the SACP meant that the agenda of the movement was driven by a reasonable multi-racial leadership. Post 1994 the movement has struggled to continue to attract other races beyond Africans. Professionals, across all races, share many similarities in terms of social stature, lifestyle and frustrations; therefore, the ANCPL presents a strategic opportunity for advancing racial diversity within the movement.
- ii. ANCPL will provide a platform for networking across multiple disciplines and this will facilitate the sharing of experiences and identifying challenges and solutions facing professionals.

C. Administrative Considerations

- 1. The demands of professional lives may be best suited with office-based and/or online-based branches which would accommodate their hectic schedules and peculiar needs, which in certain instances include working across different provinces and thus limits the ability to participate in the current branch model of the ANC. The decision to establish ANC Youth League branches in universities and technikons, as a case in point, was driven by a very sober understanding that, to achieve the Twin Task, we could no longer restrict the existence of YL branches to where young people stay but had to extend to where they learn. Similar logic must then be followed when grappling with the question of how to service professionals better.

2. Digital platforms provide tools and instruments that enable teams in large firms to collaborate on large scale projects while residing in different countries across the globe. These capabilities must be exploited to drive growth in membership numbers for the ANC and provide innovative ways to enable broader, differentiated participation and frictionless membership registration. The ANC Professionals' League, because of the level of digital skills amongst this grouping, provides the best possible case study to improve the uptake and usage of technology within the party. The fact that in 2018 we still have membership forms that sleep in some secretary's boot is an administrative blunder which is directly lead to all these battles we observe during accreditation. While it might serve certain individuals to have such manipulative access to membership data, it does not serve the party and the agenda of the ANC.
3. The wide reach of digital platforms which will be used by ANCPL will provide access to a critical-mass of expertise to establish robust subcommittees consisting of individuals who are at the coalface of every sector and industry. Locating this wealth of knowledge within the ANC is crucial for developing realistic and implementable policies and programmes.
4. The establishment of the African National Congress Professionals' League, in line with the confines of the ANC constitution, will accelerate the organization's agenda for modernization, enable new capabilities and provide new lessons and skills to the rest of the organisation across the country.
5. Above and beyond the very important practice of the ANC of ensuring 50% gender parity in all its structures, the ANCPL will further advance the youth agenda and ensure that the 40% demand for representation as advocated by the ANCYL finds expression in all policies of the ANCPL. Furthermore, understanding that the landscape of the professional world is heavily populated by young people who are facing some of the harshest working challenges and yet possess a fountain of innovative ideas, the ANCPL will be driven and led mostly by younger professionals in general but still create a space for the wisdom and experience of older professionals in leadership position.

D. Draft Constitution (attached as annexure)

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