

Statement of “Amandla” Publishers on the change in the leadership of the ANC government

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STATEMENT OF AMANDLA PUBLISHERS ON THE CHANGE IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE ANC GOVERNMENT

Amandla Publishers (www.amandla.org.za) agrees with Archbishop Emeritus and the Nobel Peace Laureate Desmond Tutu that *“If South Africa was a democracy, there had to be certainty that those who led it were as uncorrupt as possible. It is a court of law that will ultimately decide whether [leaders are or not]”*. Through publishing the bi-monthly Amandla magazine Amandla Publishers contributes to building left and working class organisations and debates.

The recall of Thabo Mbeki by the ANC NEC has less to do with his performance and policies he put in place as President and more to do with the internal conflicts in the ANC. If Thabo Mbeki’s recall truly stemmed from his policies and leadership style he should have been recalled a long time ago. He should have been fired for ramming through economic policies that left the structure and ownership of the economy largely unchanged, and policies like GEAR which liberalised the economy, helped drive tens of thousands of jobs and widened inequality. His AIDS policies resulted in the avoidable death of hundreds of thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS who were denied proper medication, nutrition, access to basic services and misinformation about the disease. His attack on free debate and his interference in independent state institutions such as the SABC, the Medical Research Council, the Medicines Control Council and others were sufficient for him to have been impeached by a consistent ANC dominated Parliament committed to the constitutionally guaranteed independence of public institutions in an open and democratic society.

These current conflicts centre on the allegations of corruption linked to the arms deal and the factional struggle for power and privilege associated with access to positions in the ruling party and government, including black economic empowerment “deployments”. Amandla Publishers adds its voice to the many South Africans calling for a full investigation into the Arms Deal so that those implicated in corruption can be prosecuted and those falsely accused can be cleared. A full and transparent investigation must occur.

Amandla Publishers supports the call for a judicial commission of inquiry on the Arms Deal whose hearings and report must be open to the public, and following which all those individuals implicated in corruption and other crimes must be subject to criminal prosecution without fear, favour or prejudice, and those who were unfairly accused of corruption and other crimes being cleared publicly. We call for public vigilance and mobilisation in support of the progressive values of our Constitution. We call for sustained social mobilisation to advance the socio-economic interests of the poor and working people and the building of left voices and platforms.

The political leadership of our country seems to waver on its commitment to a modern, plural, open,

progressive and vibrantly democratic system. This underlines the need for poor and working people to actively and robustly use their social power (including those progressive aspects of the South African Constitution) to advance their interests.

This crisis also shows that South Africa needs a different politics: a progressive popular politics, an efficient state providing quality public services, clean governance untainted by fraud and corruption, transparency and competence in the state and all public institutions.

For this we need campaigning trade unions, political parties, civics, social movements, community based organisations, churches and others united behind practical and easily understood objectives. As Amandla Publishers, we commit ourselves to work with others to contribute to the building of such organisations that promote social and economic growth and development that prioritises and meets the needs of ordinary poor and working people.

FOR COMMENTS, CALL:

1. Brian Ashley – Amandla Publishers Co-Managing Editor
2. Mazibuko K. Jara – Member of the Editorial Collective of Amandla Publishers
3. Vishwas Satgar – Member of the Editorial Collective and Editorial Advisory Board of Amandla Publishers