



STRUGGLE FOR POWER

By *Ben Turok*

It is tempting to be alarmist about the present situation in South Africa. We all know the fundamental structure of the country, with its abundant resources both human and material, is sound in comparison to that of many similar countries. However, our economic growth rate is almost zero (with a population increase of 1.7 percent), which means that our population is getting poorer.

Substantial welfare provision for the poor cannot compensate for the huge level of unemployment which is hitting many families hard. The government seems unable to do much about it. It is no wonder that there are so many voices articulating deep concern about our politics. A range of prominent people from a variety of backgrounds, including veterans and even former government figures, are now speaking out about the lack of leadership and direction from those in authority. They reflect the deep sense of unease in our country.

In this issue, we publish a full transcript of Siphosiso Pityana's dramatic speech at the memorial for the late Rev. Makhenkesi Stofile. Pityana took the audience by surprise but he received loud applause and was embraced by many leaders.

In an equally remarkable speech, former President Kgalema Motlanthe, who is also the chair of New Agenda's editorial board, warned a regional ANC consultative conference in Port Elizabeth that the ANC would die if it did not change. Gwede Mantashe, the general-secretary of the ANC, has also acknowledged that corruption and factionalism pose a great danger to the ANC.



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Looking back at the last few years of our government, we can see strenuous efforts to introduce a variety of reforms to improve the conditions of our people. But the proposed welfare reforms are clearly not enough to solve our problems. We need major structural reform to deal with unemployment and to address problems in the provision and quality of education, health and other basic services. The time of acceptable piecemeal adjustments seems to have passed and there is now

broad agreement that transformation is needed.

Yet the responses of the government and the ANC are inconsistent and unclear. Indeed, some people asking if the ANC is still a liberation movement – or has it become a conventional office-seeking political party in a multi-party parliamentary democracy? This question merits a great deal of debate, and some tough decisions. **NA**