

Conference for the Future of South Africa

Declaration

We, delegates from civil society formations across the length and breadth of South Africa, gathered on 18 July 2017 (Nelson Mandela International Day) at the Conference for the Future of South Africa in Johannesburg:

Affirm that:

1. Our people have struggled against colonialism and apartheid for centuries, with unparalleled commitment and dedication;
2. As result of these struggles, we have begun building a society that is non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous, with a Constitution that entrenches the rule of law and strengthens our commitment to a more just society;
3. It is our undying belief that a government based on the will of the majority must govern in a responsible and ethical manner, in the best social and economic interests of its people, and must commit the country to a path that reduces poverty, narrows inequality and achieves social justice.

Witness:

1. The deepening crisis of poverty, unemployment and inequality;
2. The erosion of our democracy and good governance particularly under the Zuma presidency;
3. The escalating litany of poor service delivery in all spheres of government, coupled with widespread corruption, an ineffective and partial criminal justice system, initiation of a reckless nuclear programme, dysfunctional state-owned companies, and sovereign downgrading by rating agencies;
4. The systematic undermining of the Constitution, Chapter 9 institutions and the judiciary by people who are supposed to act as the very guardians of our Constitution;
5. The subversion of our hard-earned democracy by the capture of the state by senior government leaders, working in collusion with private interests;
6. The pervasive abuse of state power, including the use of the security apparatus, to further private interests and inhibit legitimate protest.

Believe that:

1. The people of South Africa have a strong tradition of resistance to any form of authoritarianism, and are determined to continue that tradition;
2. The organisations we represent affirm our commitment to the principles and values enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa;
3. A united and active civil society is an essential ingredient of a democratic dispensation and has the capability to strongly advocate and mobilise for the elimination of state capture and rebuilding the integrity of the state.

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Demand that:

1. President Zuma should step down immediately. He is no longer fit to be head of state;
2. State capture must be rooted out and its perpetrators brought to justice;
3. Self-interested and secret procurement arrangements on state projects such as the nuclear energy programme must be halted;
4. The credibility, independence and capability of the criminal justice system must be restored;
5. The institutions of our democracy such as Chapter 9 institutions and the judiciary must be protected;
6. The critical oversight role of Parliament must be strengthened;
7. The public service must be professional and non-partisan;
8. The state-owned companies must be cleaned up of corruption and their good governance restored;
9. A national dialogue be established to create a framework for an inclusive economy that ensures equality and a better life for all.

Resolve to:

1. Campaign and organise and mobilise the people of our country in pursuit of our principal demands;
2. Form a coordinating structure to ensure that our activities have maximum impact, and that we succeed in our mission to stop state capture, recapture the state, and rebuild our country in the spirit of the Constitution.