

**Organisational Renewal - Building the ANC as a movement for transformation
and a strategic centre of power
COSATU's Response**

A. Introduction

1. The discussion document on Organisation Renewal makes a candid analysis about organisation strengths and weaknesses, threats, dangers and opportunities in the current phase of our revolution. The centenary of the ANC and the 18 years of the democratic dispensation give the movement an unprecedented opportunity to make a forthright examination of challenges facing us.
2. To COSATU the paper, alongside the second transition paper, is the most critical because it is about whether the ANC, its allies and the congress movement as whole will continue to exist. Most critically it is about the future of the ANC in the next 100 years. It is about whether the current generation of leaders, cadres and membership will hand over to the next generation a movement that is united, strong, morally sound and a hope for their future. COSATU believes that, because of a clear overlap between the two documents, they should have been a single document.
3. The biggest challenge facing the ANC and the rest of the democratic forces is not a lack of ideas but our failure to implement what has been agreed and to have the political will to implement what we know is politically and morally correct.
4. As we will show, the ANC, its allies and the rest of the democratic forces have for many years been pointing out the current weaknesses and have taken bold resolutions on what is to be done. Yet our track record in doing anything about the identified weaknesses leaves much to be desired. This has not been a problem of leadership alone but a problem of both those who lead and those who are led. We lack political will to implement our own decisions, in particular when those decisions are against powerful interests in the organisation.
5. The biggest challenge therefore is the desperate need for a mindset change to effect these changes if we are to safeguard the future of our movement.
6. Before we engage with the paper which we welcome wholeheartedly, we wish to repeat some very good resolutions taken by the movement on countless occasions in the past on exactly the same issues the paper is raising today. All of these will demonstrate hopefully that we do not sound like a broken record repeating the same points we have raised over and over again.
7. We welcome the call that the "Mangaung Centenary Conference should strive to become a watershed by addressing some of the persistent challenges that have plagued our movement since 1994". We argue that this will not happen unless everyone welcomes the need for a fresh start – a new beginning!

Brief history to take into consideration. Are we sounding like broken record?

8. The ANC is not facing these challenges for the first time. For instance, a document now known as the Hani Memorandum, authored by Chris Hani and a few of his comrades, listed careerism, opportunism, nepotism and the leadership's feet-dragging approach to leading the offensive against the apartheid regime from inside the country as serious challenges facing the ANC at that time. Allegations of ANC leaders materially benefiting from the struggle against apartheid by receiving large sums of money from international donors and agencies or by running private business whilst in exile were not unfamiliar.
9. The difference however is that the Hani memorandum spawned the Morogoro Consultative Conference in 1969 which provided the movement with a window of opportunity for self-reflection and the adoption of some bold steps to reorient the people's movement. The question every cadre should ask is – will the Mangaung conference be another Morogoro or will it be the point where the movement continues to devour itself?
10. The ANC has, at different points since Morogoro in the recent past, recognised the paralysing effects that factionalism, corruption, money and disunity pose to the movement. The 50th Conference of the ANC in Mafikeng 1997 discussed these challenges at length, noting, “how leadership of the ANC is increasingly perceived as a stepping stone to powerful positions in the state (local, provincial and national) or in business.”¹
11. The same conference also noted the extent to which there is a social rift between ANC cadres occupying key positions of power (councillors, mayors, premiers, MECs, ministers etc) from the mass of ANC members and broader society. The 1997 Strategy and Tactics was honest about the dangers of a social distance between ANC leaders and the motive forces of the revolution and lamented that a tendency in which cadres of the movement become “progressively lethargic to the conditions of the poor” was taking root.²
12. The discussion document adds that we have witnessed in the recent past, divisive leadership battles in the ANC, some of which are really about control over access to resources and patronage.
13. The 2000 NGC Mid-term Review also singled out careerism, corruption and opportunism as rising tendencies in the ANC.³
14. The 2000 NGC Mid-term Review also singled out careerism, corruption and opportunism as rising tendencies in the ANC.⁴
15. As the 52nd National Conference noted, “we have also seen foreign tendencies such as ghost membership, rent-a-member, winner-takes-all, unceasing lobbying, howling and heckling, pigeon-holing of comrades, the launch of branches solely for congress purposes, criminalisation of dissent,

¹ Organisational Report of the 50th National Conference of the ANC, Mafikeng 1997.

² Strategy and Tactics 1997, www.anc.org.za

³ Mid-term Review 2000 NGC, www.anc.org.za

⁴ Mid-term Review 2000 NGC, www.anc.org.za

blind loyalty to individuals and factions, abuse of organisational symbols and cultures for factional lobbying and campaigning and sometimes bloody violence in ANC conferences.”⁵

16. In short, five years after being elected to lead transformation, the ANC was forced to respond to the growing concerns of corruption raised by its own constituencies. In the second national elections the ANC had this to say amongst others on corruption:

“We shall enforce strict measures, without fear or favour, to root out corruption in the public and private sectors, in our own organisation, and in society as a whole”

17. Again in the 2000 local government manifesto, the ANC responding to growing concerns about corruption in the local government sphere, included in the manifesto a decision that:

“Each candidate standing will, before the election, take the following oath in public meeting. After signing, the oath, the code of conduct will be prominently displayed in the nearest ANC public representative’s office.

“I stand to serve the community.

I solemnly declare that I stand to be elected as a representative of my community, without motives of material advantage or personal gain.

As a councillor of the ANC I will place my energies and skills at the disposal of my community, and carry out the tasks given to me. I will work side-by-side with the whole community as we strive to build a better life for all South Africans.

I will fight against corruption in any guise or form.

I will listen to the views of the community and hold a public meeting with all community members to report back on my work, at least four times a year.

I will live in the community that has elected me.

I will do my best to build and develop my community.

I will uphold the policies of my organisation, the African National Congress.”

18. The 2004 national elections manifesto again took a very progressive stance against crime and corruption, when it said we shall:

- *Deploy more than 150 000 police in active duty, with more visible policing, better management as well as community liaison at police station level*
- *Strengthen the prosecution system and the Scorpions, improve co-ordination amongst all law-enforcement and intelligence agencies and set up additional special courts especially to deal with abuse of women and children and commercial crimes.*
- *Improve the protection of borders to stem illegal migration, massively reduce cross-border crime, including meeting our obligation to South*

⁵ Organisational Report of the ANC’s 51st National Conference, www.anc.org.za. The 52nd National Conference also identified the same challenges.

Africans and humanity in the fight against terrorism and to protect our marine resources.

- *Ensure efficient functioning of all anti-corruption structures and systems, including whistle blowing, blacklisting of corrupt companies, implementation of laws to ensure exposure of, and action against, private sector corruption, and quicker processes to deal with any corrupt civil servants and public officials”*

19. Spurred by the Polokwane conference resolutions, the 2009 elections manifesto had five priorities which including fighting crime and corruption. The manifesto made a strong commitment that “corruption must be stamped out”. Amongst other the manifesto committed the ANC government to:

“Step up measures in the fight against corruption within society, the state and private sector, including measures to ensure politicians do not tamper with the adjudication of tenders. Measures will also be taken to ensure transparent processes in the tendering system, as well as ensuring much stronger accountability of the public servants involved in tendering processes.”

20. In the 2011 local government elections, again inspired by the Polokwane resolutions and five priorities of the 2009 national elections manifesto, the ANC local government elections manifesto made the following commitment:

“The ANC government, together with the people, will:

- *Review tendering systems by making them transparent and deal systematically with corruption and shoddy contractual work. Contractors who have delivered poor services will be blacklisted and forbidden from doing business with any government structure.*

We need a change of mindset more than we need more beautiful words!

21. COSATU argues that as much as the current paper is inspirational and bold, our challenge as we said in the introduction is not yet another set of beautiful words, but the political will to implement our own resolutions. Our challenge is the need for a mindset change to move in an opposite direction.

22. In order to embrace a need for a mindset change, we must admit that we are a sick movement that fast resembles only a shadow of what it used to be. Many will find this truth very annoying and may in response deny that we are a sick organisation. But the starting point for a patient, if the treatment is to work, must be to admit that all is not well. The paper on many occasions eloquently points out our crisis.

23. A systematic implementation of the manifesto alone would have taken us very far in the opposite direction to where we are today. Again it comes to political will and not beautiful words.

24. The ANC paper observes that our noble values and traditions are being eroded by factionalist battles and unending leadership schisms and that these pose a stumbling block to building a movement that our forbears would be proud of.

What is the ANC and what is its Character?

25. At this moment of difficulties and reflection, it is appropriate to look at the traditions, values and principles of the movement we seek to rebuild, so that we can use it as a mirror, without which we may not know what we seek to achieve.
26. The ANC National Working Committee in 2001 had this to say about the ANC's organisational culture and morality:
- 1) A revolutionary democratic movement: The ANC pursues fundamental change to create a better life for all. Equality among all South Africans in choosing a government of their choice, using the country's resources to improve conditions of especially the poor, and removing racism in the ownership and distribution of wealth are among our core principles. Within its ranks, the ANC ensures the participation of members in shaping the movement's policies and programmes.
 - 2) A non-racial national movement: It is critical that our struggle brings about an end to apartheid relations in all areas of life. The ANC believes in the equal worth of all human beings. We seek to unite South Africans across racial and ethnic differences, taking into account the central role of Blacks in general and Africans in particular, given their exclusion under apartheid. We practice these principles within the organisation.
 - 3) A broad national democratic movement: The ANC represents the mass of forces that pursue social transformation. Individuals belonging to different classes and strata form part of these forces, because they stand to gain from fundamental change. However, the ANC is keenly aware of the social basis of apartheid. It recognises the leading role of the working class and pays special attention to the poor.
 - 4) A mass movement: The ANC seeks to bring into its ranks as many South Africans as possible who accept its principles and policies. As a legal organisation, it does not target only particular advanced political activists for recruitment. As long as one accepts its policies and takes its oath, anyone can become a member.
 - 5) A non-sexist movement: Over time, the ANC has embraced the principle of gender equality as one of the central features of national liberation. This is reinforced through the equitable representation of women at all levels of the movement, and it requires the conscious implementation of affirmative action within our ranks.
 - 6) A leader of the democratic forces: Because of what it stands for, and its track record in the fight against apartheid colonialism, the ANC emerged as the leader of the forces who pursue a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. It seeks to unite all these forces and their organisations into a movement for fundamental change. Its leaders and members should win the confidence of organisations of the people.
 - 7) A champion of progressive internationalism: The ANC's objectives are informed by the aspirations of the people of SA, Africa and millions others in all parts of the world. Over the years, it has contributed to, and benefited

from, struggles across the globe for a just, equitable and humane world order; and it remains committed to these ideals.”⁶

27. In our view the character of any organisation is naturally and inevitably determined by its activity. Similarly, as the 1997 Mafikeng Conference asserted, the character of the ANC is determined by the nature of the core tasks that confront the national democratic revolution (NDR) in our country at any specific historical time.
28. The character of the ANC has evolved to correspond with the tasks of the NDR.
29. The Mafikeng Conference in 1997 defined the character of the ANC thus: “The ANC is a national liberation movement and it is characterised as such because of the continuing legacy of colonialism and white minority domination in all sectors of our society. This legacy impacts upon the ways in which black people in general, and Africans in particular, are differently affected by everything, ranging from unemployment, to literacy, to life expectancy levels.
30. The ANC is defined as a movement because of its commitment to a mass approach line, based on the belief that the people are their own liberators and that the tasks that confront us require the active involvement of popular forces. The ANC has always sought to be more than a party of mass support, but also seeks to be a movement of mass participation.
31. Even though we accept that the ANC has “always sought to be more than a party of mass support, but also seeks to be a movement of mass participation” but experience shows that it has over the years gradually moved to be exclusively a party of mass support at the expense of mass participation. We saw this when the ANC moved to abandon the RDP as a people-centred and people-driven approach to development, that move was coupled with the demobilisation of the masses. It is in such processes, where the ANC practically abandoned the mass line and remained with a mass perspective which allowed us to tap into the mass strength during elections, only to abandon them after elections during policy formulation in government. In the recent past we have been dismayed by how the masses have been ignored on their call for scrapping of e-tolls in Gauteng and banning of labour brokers.
32. The ANC has in the process stopped putting values in the application of the mass line, the concept which represents the revolutionary perspective of our movement.
33. The **mass line** is the primary method of revolutionary leadership of the masses, which is employed by the most conscious and best organised section of the masses. It is a reiterative method, applied over and over again, which step-by-step advances the interests of the masses, and in particular their central interest within bourgeois society. The ANC has over the years conflated and replaced the Mass Line with the Mass Perspective. These are different but integral concepts which reinforce each other.

⁶ Through the eye of the needle – Choosing the best cadres to lead transformation, ANC NWC Discussion Document, 2001, www.anc.org.za (also see *Umrabulo* Number 11, June-July 2001)

34. In other words the existence of a mass perspective will allow the organisation to put value in the application of a mass line but that does not happen automatically; it is a conscious effort informed by the desire to direct the revolution to a particular outcome.
35. The organisational prerequisite for the ANC, if we are to succeed in the second transition will be a conscious application of the mass line, which propelled the ANC to the watershed 1949 Conference and beyond and that propelled the ANC to convene the congress of the people which adopted the Freedom Charter. It is the same thing that led to the ANC convening the watershed 1969 Morogoro Conference. It is actually the ANC's adherence to the mass line which took us to the 1994 breakthrough, albeit with the emergence of alien tendencies which began to emerge during the negotiations in which the masses began to be treated as secondary. The ANC must assert the mass line if the second transition is to enjoy any credibility among the masses which the ANC leads.
36. For the ANC to be equal to the task of the second transition, it will have to allow its character as a mass based national liberation movement to become dominant without compromising its post-1994 role as a political party.
37. The tasks of the second transition require a realisation that state power must be buttressed by mass power. In that process the ANC will have to concurrently transform state power so that it gives concrete and beneficial meaning to the relationship between the working class (as the primary motive force in the NDR) and the means of production.
38. One of the major weaknesses of the Second Transition document is that it is blind to the fact that there are specific organisational prerequisites which the ANC must consciously meet or address if it is to lead the Second Transition. These include the issues articulated in the document entitled Organisational Renewal which included the following:
- It reaffirms the movement character of the ANC and calls for the strengthening of this element and a return of the ANC to the "mass line". Amongst the proposals contained is the urgent need to revive the activism of ANC branches and reorient them towards a politics based on development and the urge to serve the people as opposed to the parasitic politics informed by factionalism and in-fighting.
 - It recognises the paralysing effects that factionalism, corruption and disunity pose to the movement. The 50th Conference of the ANC in Mafikeng 1997 discussed these challenges at length, noting "how leadership of the ANC is increasingly perceived as a stepping stone to powerful positions in the state (local, provincial and national) or in business."⁷ The same conference also noted the extent to which there is a social rift between ANC cadres occupying key positions of power (councillors, mayors, premiers, MECs, ministers etc) from the mass of ANC members and broader society. The 1997 Strategy and Tactics was honest about the dangers of a social distance between ANC leaders and the motive forces of the revolution and lamented that a tendency

⁷ Organisational Report of the 50th National Conference of the ANC, Mafikeng 1997.

in which cadres of the movement become “progressively lethargic to the conditions of the poor” was taking root.⁸

- The discussion document adds that we have witnessed in the recent past, divisive leadership battles in the ANC, some of which are really about control over access to resources and patronage.
39. The ANC is a home to a variety of progressive ideological currents and of a variety of different classes and strata, all united behind a common commitment to national democratic transformation.
 40. The multi-class character of the ANC does not, however, mean that the ANC ignores the significance of class. The ANC is a multi-class movement with a bias towards the black working class and the rural and urban poor.
 41. Chapter 5 of the paper outlines the theoretical perspectives on the ANC as a movement for transformation and the strategic centre of power. This detailed outline of what the ANC really is, is welcome. This is what the cadres of the movement should focus on. Above all this is what distinguishes the ANC from the rest.
 42. The paper is spot on paragraph 24 in quoting the 2000 NGC on “ANC – the peoples movement and agent for change”, the 2002 Strategy and Tactics Preface on “the ANC as a discipline force of the left”
 43. In Chapter 7, on safeguarding the core values and organisational integrity of the ANC, the paper had this to say about its core values:
The core values of the ANC are as follows: courage, service, self-sacrifice, human solidarity, integrity, temperance, humility, honesty, hard-work, self-discipline and mutual respect.
 44. In same chapter the paper says there should be a relative harmony and synergy between the stated ideals of the organisation and its day-to-day practices – we must be the change we seek.
 45. The challenge of the ANC today is to ensure that all of its leaders practise what the ANC preaches and becomes “the change we seek”.
 46. The Strategy and Tactics adopted in the 52nd National Conference clarifies this point further - that the multi-class character of the ANC does not make the ANC to behave like a shapeless jelly-fish with a political form that is fashioned hither and thither by the multiple contradictory forces of sea-waves. There should be clear value systems that attach to being a member and a leader of the ANC, informed by the strategic objectives that we pursue.

Enforcing this character of the ANC is the key to its future

47. The critical challenge we face is to get all the new and old members to build the ANC based on the values and principles stated in the preceding paragraphs.

⁸ Strategy and Tactics 1997, www.anc.org.za

48. COSATU's main criticism is captured in the ANC paper itself – that we must practise what we preach and become 'the change we seek'.
49. The paper is again spot-on in listing reasons behind leadership not being able to enforce this party line so to speak
50. The main reason why leadership has been weakened is that almost every leader today in the movement is a product of slate politics, divisions and factionalism. In some cases leadership that emerged from a divided congress finds it very difficult to outgrow the factional past and dissolve factions they led and or belonged to before the last congress.
51. The most negative aspect of this is when the leadership surrounds themselves with sycophants – the yes men/ women that comrade Nelson Mandela warned against in Mafikeng conference of 1997. This why we must reject the circulating of slates, which can lead to talented individuals who do not belong in a 'correct slate' or the 'progressive camp' being sidelined and their talents not utilised for the common good of the organisation and country. Instead members of the winning camp, in a real 'winner-takes-all' mentality, deploy themselves in both government and the organisation so that they can defend their slate in the next congress. This vicious cycle is what all accept as a breeding ground for mediocrity, tolerance or even defence of the indefensible by loyal factions which then results in our movement losing the respect built by the generation before ours.
52. Unless we change the minds et we may find ourselves in a vicious cycle where the slate that won in the previous conference is perpetually fortifying its forts and defending itself from the slate that lost out. Paragraph 120 (e) talks to how these energy-usurping processes not only defocus us from our real tasks but leads to paralysis, as no one is prepared to act against the camp that they will need permanently. That is how the organisation and leadership ceases to be principled whose price is that the organisation loses respect since it does not stand for anything but a factional agenda.
53. This point is raised forcefully in the paper penned by comrade Joe Netshitenzhe in his recent input to the Young Communist League on competing identities of a national liberation movement versus electoral party politics – the challenges of incumbency. He had this to say:
- “Within parties, intra-party patronage and corruption take root. The political centre is unable to correct the local mediators to mass constituencies and the foot-soldiers on whom it relies to garner votes. In pursuit of numbers, a price is attached to a Conference delegate's vote. And to paraphrase a lecturer at a recent Gauteng political education workshop, a toxic leadership then begets toxic members, some of whom actually demand financial and other incentives to vote in particular ways.”*
54. COSATU's biggest fear is that the 'local mediators to mass constituencies' will arrive in Mangaung, and instead of using it as a platform of reflection, will reduce it into a narrow leadership contest. In this case post-Mangaung you will have a defeated slate that launches its campaign towards 2017. Eventually the movement will use all its energies in internal battles and leave our masses leaderless. Nature does not allow a vacuum! That is why the liberals are

gaining confidence every day, marching to COSATU, mocking our leaders, etc.

Summary of Key points

The paper argues that an Organisational Review process needs to prioritise the following:

1. Development and systematic implementation of a new cadre policy
2. Reconnecting the ANC to its mass base, strengthening its work among the motive forces and enhancing the role of the motive forces in governance
3. Renewal of the ANC's core values and safeguarding its reputation
4. Re-organising the ANC organisational machinery to improve our performance in all the pillars of transformation
5. Strengthening the Alliance and progressive civil society as well as progressive social movements
6. Improve the capacity of the developmental state
7. Improve the financial sustainability and self-sufficiency of the movement⁹

Strengths of the Discussion Paper

55. In many ways these priorities as identified in the paper echo our long-standing calls regarding reorientation of the movement and refocusing it to realise the principal tasks of the NDR. The paper is laudable in the following respects:
56. Firstly, acknowledging that despite the great strides that the ANC government has made over the past 18 years of democracy, particularly in the fields of human rights and meeting basic needs, the apartheid fault-lines remain stubbornly in place, in the fields of health, education, economy, labour market etc. The paper also shares our sentiment that the most pressing task facing the ANC government is to address the triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment.
57. Secondly, the paper takes issue with neoliberal policy discourse and practice pursued by the ANC government since the adoption of GEAR in 1996 and reiterates the Polokwane conference observation that neoliberalism is in direct contrast with the ANC's vision for a caring society based on human solidarity.
58. Thirdly, there is recognition that protest is often a signal, warning the movement to heed the people's demands. It is a way of fortifying the ANC and reorienting it where it is seen as veering off the NDR.
59. Fourthly, the paper reaffirms the movement character of the ANC and calls for the strengthening of this element and a return of the ANC to the "mass line".

⁹ See Organisational Renewal - Building the ANC as a movement for transformation and a strategic centre of power, Version 9, 10 April 2012, page 6.

Amongst the proposals contained is the urgent need to revive the activism of ANC branches and reorient them towards a politics based on development and the urge to serve the people as opposed to the parasitic politics informed by factionalism and in-fighting.

Limitations of the Paper – COSATU’s proposal to strengthen the paper

a) Address the intersection between political office and business

60. Despite many commendable observations and proposals, the paper has several limitations. It almost buries its head in the sand when it comes to the erosion of ANC values because of the undue influence of business in our movement’s structures.
61. It does not adequately address the extent to which business interests and their weight and influence organisationally and in the state have compromised ANC values. The document virtually ignores the concern of COSATU and many other ANC leaders about the intersection and overlap between political leadership, especially in the state, and business.
62. The policy conference will have done an injustice to the mandate to craft policies and proactively respond to the challenges facing the movement if it does not at least robustly debate the urgent need for a new policy that seeks to address the overlap between business and political office and the horrid and corrupt political atmosphere created by this reality.
63. Simply declaring business interests does not eliminate the conflict of interest between serving the people and profit maximisation. The involvement of government leadership in business compromises the government’s integrity and the commitment of those deployed by the movement to addressing the pressing concerns of the people.
64. This revolving door between business and government leadership gives rise to an inevitable temptation to utilise leadership positions in government to the direct benefit of the leaders concerned.
65. COSATU considers this as one of the crucial steps to defeating the scourge of corruption in the public sector.
66. This omission on the part of the paper is an unfortunate regression from even previous ANC documents, which at least noted the relationship between business interests and the ANC’s revolutionary morality.
67. What this means is that COSATU must campaign vigorously in the run-up to the Policy Conference to ensure that our call finds expression in the resolutions of this conference.
68. **COSATU proposal on addressing the conflict of interests:** Public representatives cannot be public servants and business people at the same time. The same applies to leaders of the unions and SACP. We propose that all public representatives should choose whether they want to be people’s representatives who must live within the means of the salaries their position provide or business people. They can’t choose both!

69. Where a person is elected whilst s/he is already involved in business, a mechanism should be found where his/her business interests shall be placed in a trust that cannot be active whilst he/she is still serving in political office.

70. In addition to this, a rule must be introduced that when a family of a public representative is involved in business, a conflict of interest must be avoided at all costs. A rule must be introduced so that no family member of any public representative may do business with the state. We believe the source of most of our problems arises out of this intersection. It is time to confront the problem head on.

b) Build capacity of the state and stop outsourcing!

71. Another important step is to reverse the policy of outsourcing public work. Putting work out to tender, which public service workers could do internally, threatens jobs in the public sector and leads to a worsening of working conditions. The Department of Public Works must also be strengthened to implement this policy and thus build and strengthen the developmental state.

72. Endemic outsourcing must also be challenged as it creates a climate in which tender fraud flourishes, as more contracts are dangled in front of private companies for work, which could be done by workers employed directly.

73. The ANC has taken a number of steps already agreed which will remain a pipe dream until we build a strong organisation underpinned by the values that have guaranteed the ANC its first 100 years – selflessness – integrity and honesty.

c) Implement Polokwane resolution on framework for post-tenure rules

74. **Thirdly:** The ANC 52nd conference Polokwane in 2007 and the manifesto for 2009 said we “must develop a framework on post-tenure rules, including a cooling-off period during which public representatives and senior officials will be prevented from accepting appointment to a board, employment or any other substantial benefit from a private sector organisation that has benefitted from a contract, tender or partnership agreement with the public service/state in a process that the official has participated in.”

75. This is a particular problem, which we have called ‘throwing the javelin’. The Department of Public Service has developed guidelines for a cooling-off period of one year after a public servant leaves the public service before they can have an interest in businesses, which they formerly dealt with, but we believe it should be five years. We wish that we could enforce even the weak one-year period.

d) Implement manifesto commitment on ensuring no tempering with tenders

76. The manifesto said we “will step up measures to ensure politicians do not tamper with the adjudication of tenders; the process of the tendering system is transparent; as well as ensuring much stronger accountability of public servants involved in the tendering process.” The policy conference must pronounce itself on the dangerous tendency to perpetually make prognosis and diagnosis of our problems without emphasising implementation.

e) Review the ministerial handbook so that it is underpinned by our ethos

77. The former Minister of Public Service was instructed to review the ministerial handbook so that it is underpinned by the ethos and the culture of selflessness. This process is yet to bear results. This points to the blatant disregard the movement has to its own resolutions and commitments.

f) Be consistent and strong on corruption; introduce a new policy to save the image of the organisation when leaders are accused of serious crimes and corruption

78. The discussion document is not as candid as we would expect about the challenges of corruption laid at the doorstep of some of the movement leadership, at national, provincial and local levels.

79. The paper does not equip us with tools to approach situations when the movement leadership is accused or implicated in criminal and corrupt cases.

80. How does the movement address the challenges such as the one where virtually all ANC members in the legislature come out in full support, parading ANC symbols and sacrificing their day's work, to witness and show support to a comrade who has corruption charges to answer to?

81. What about instances where factions brandishing the sacred symbols of the movement come out in full support outside courtrooms in defence of a comrade accused of murdering another comrade, without any regard for the message that this type of behaviour communicates to our people?

82. Should we not be setting the scene for a new revolutionary morality which will mean that individuals must be willing to sacrifice themselves for the greater good of the organisation? Clearly a leading member of the movement facing serious allegations of criminality, be it corruption, theft, rape or murder, based on credible evidence, should bear in mind the interests of the movement and the damage that such scandals cause to the ANC's reputation in society, and be willing to resign from his/her position of responsibility at least until full investigations are conducted into the accusations.

83. This is notwithstanding the constitutional right to equality before the law and the principle of innocence until proven guilty.

84. Is it not time that the movement considers the cost that the election of tainted individuals into positions of responsibility and leadership in the movement does to its standing amongst the masses and devise means to curb this?

85. The danger in allowing the status quo to prevail is that it gives rise to a dangerous situation in which the movement stands opposed to the majority of our people, who are the most affected by corruption. The limitation is that the paper fails to provide a compass for navigating these tough questions.

86. The ANC also needs to confront the dangers inherent in having to rely on the business sector for its own funding, which can lead to major conflicts of interest.

g) Analyse the role of the state in a capitalist society

87. The paper analyses the state and our relationship to it in largely de-classed fashion, as opposed to seeing the state as part and parcel of a class society.

Consequently, the paper argues that “the relationship between the trade union movement and the democratic state is fraught with destructive tension and unhealthy contradictions. The public sector trade unions from the ranks of the Congress movement and the cadres of our movement deployed in the state are often locked up in skirmishes that undermine our common agenda to serve the people. The approach to public sector bargaining is based on a model that assumes that the employer and employees are locked up in mortal combat in which only the fittest survives. These battles have a negative bearing on the pace and content of transformation”¹⁰

88. Undemeath this “observation” lie sentiments that are geared mainly towards taming the radicalism of the organised section of the working class and weakening our position in relation to capital.
89. We cannot help but see this, combined with recent attacks on trade unions and workers’ rights to collective bargaining and strike, as yet another attempt to beat workers into submission.
90. History is littered with cases when post-liberation, the national liberation movement moves with speed to demobilise its primary constituencies and thus delegitimise any form of protest as the work of “enemy agents”.
91. The danger here is that although the paper largely denounces the decline in activism within the broader movement and the demobilisation of society, its analysis of the trade union movement veers back towards seeing any protest undertaken in any sphere of government as directly challenging the ANC’s rule.
92. In the recent past, we have seen industrial action against capitalists or the reactionary South African Reserve Bank being painted as strikes against the ANC and its government. A Civil Society conference organised with progressive organisations earns COSA TU the criticism that it is flirting with the ANC’s adversaries.
93. The paper argues that the trade union movement has struggled to define its mandate post liberation – from one involved in anti-establishment politics against apartheid government to one actively involved in what the paper calls “development activism”
94. The paper does not confront the reality that the militancy and anger of the trade union movement in South Africa coincides with the ANC’s shift to the right and its new-found love for neoliberal policies since 1996.
95. Such allegiance to neoliberal ideology is evidenced in the everyday practice of the state – the commodification of basic needs (through prepaid electricity and water meters), the sale of state assets, fiscal and monetary policies, youth wage subsidy, defence of labour brokers etc.
96. The ANC government’s adoption of neoliberal policies is the most important factor in explaining why the movement has found itself on the opposite fence with the masses of the people.

¹⁰ Organisational Renewal - Building the ANC as a movement for transformation and a strategic centre of power, Version 9, 10 April 2012, page 58.

97. In this respect, the document raises a good point that “even when workers and communities engage in protests, they do so as a way of communicating with the ANC so that it can rapidly address their aspirations, concerns and frustrations”¹¹
98. The ANC needs to realise that a radical and mobilised population, especially a radical working class which is the leader of the NDR, is absolutely indispensable to realising the kind of society we wish to achieve.
99. A mobilised population is one of the critical elements in shifting the balance of forces in our favour. Mass power can effectively counterpose imperialist domination and weakening of the movement’s ability to adopt radical economic programme in the service of the population.
100. Overall, the paper raises the need to discuss COSATU’s independence vis-a-vis its role as an integral part of the Alliance. The independence of COSATU is sacred but this does not mean that the ANC should not influence its trade union ally and vice versa.

h) Recognise that divisions are a breeding ground of mediocrity

101. The paper takes issue with the reign of mediocrity within the ANC’s ranks and in the state and the wearing away of the ANC’s role as a strategic centre of power. Having made a thorough analysis of the weaknesses plaguing the movement such as the deployment of mediocre, unsuitable and incompetent cadres at strategic points in the state, based on factional allegiance rather than the conviction to serve our people, the paper proposes strengthening the ANC cadre policy in order to prioritise political education for all members, to strengthen the cadre deployment policy through encouraging the deployment of skilled and competent cadres in different spheres of power, especially the state; strengthening organisational capacity to undertake research, lead policy development and all spheres and centres in society and revitalising the ability of the movement to lead campaigns that seek to realise a better life for all, particularly the ANC’s core constituency (the poor).
102. COSATU supports this move wholeheartedly. Ironically we have made the loudest noise on this and today we should feel good that the ANC has listened. Every day we deal with the consequences of mediocrity as a result of deployment of unsuitable and incompetent cadres in strategic positions. You have to visit the Gauteng public hospitals and speak to management and workers to hear the extent of the damage associated with corruption. You have to visit Limpopo and speak to parents, students and educators who are still waiting for books to arrive six months after the year has started, to understand the real price we pay for corruption and mediocrity. You have to visit the Eastern Cape and see the chaos in its education department to appreciate the damage of mediocrity. We won’t speak about the situation facing many rural towns.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 8.

103. In short, slate politics and divisions are a breeding ground for mediocrity and incompetence, corruption and factionalism, which in turn kills the image of the ANC and lead to many doubting its values so well articulated in its manifesto documents.

i) The Alliance

104. The paper acknowledges the importance of the ANC/COSATU/SACP Alliance but it needs to be clearer on the crucial role it must play, as a class alliance, which has to be the most critical way of influencing the ANC. It is not true the only way to influence ANC is being on the ANC NEC.

105. The Alliance must be seen to be acting together to inspire our people to be ready for the 2014 elections.

j) Define oppositionist stance to avoid labelling anyone who disagrees as being oppositionist

106. In many areas it refers to COSATU and ANC grassroots structures as playing an oppositional stance. The concept of being oppositional is not unpacked in the paper, a leading to a danger of it being subjected to different interpretations or even different political agendas with the danger that anybody who disagrees may be labelled oppositionist.

107. We disagree with the notion that any disagreement with a specific policy proposal should warrant labelling of COSATU and ANC branches as oppositional.

108. On too many occasions in the past 18 years a number of ANC and Alliance leaders have accused COSATU of being "oppositional". Some leaders even were bold to say COSATU and the DA are strange bedfellows. All this is directed at making the federation doubt its ideological positions and to be half-hearted in following through its resolutions.

109. We have historically raised as a problem the lack of consultation and the sidelining of the federation from key policy decisions. We have also noted that Alliance processes have collapsed and structures to process policy within the Alliance have been rendered dysfunctional. Platforms of engagement that are more open for the working class now are in Nedlac, where the ANC-led government tends to support big business on matters of policy, in opposition to COSATU.

110. We have also noted the conspicuous absence of the disciplined force of the left in the concrete struggles of the working class - no messages of support from the ANC leadership when workers are on strike for a living wage, better working conditions, etc. Workers are left to fight battles alone, only to be told that their standpoints are oppositional to the ANC and its government. The ANC is now known to be conspicuous with its absence in strike actions and in service delivery protests by working class communities.

111. The ANC has not campaigned on any of the issues, thereby abandoning the streets to the reactionary forces. How for example can it justify the posture of SALGA in reneging on collective bargaining agreements?

112. There is also a concern at the lack of response from many ANC employees to memorandums submitted by demonstrators.
113. What worries us as COSATU is that the policy content of the ANC-led government is actually oppositional to some of the historic demands of the Freedom Charter and the NDR. Many of the contentious policies that COSATU so vehemently opposes are actually taken from the DA! This is particularly clear with the policy stances that have consistently emerged from the National Treasury and more recently, the National Development Plan, which the ANC never opened for Alliance engagement.
114. The DA has been consistently calling for a) Youth Wage Subsidies; the ANC-led government is implementing it without Alliance consultation. b) Cutting the costs of doing business, is the DA mantra that has found attraction in the ANC-led government policies, c) DA wants to extend probationary periods and to make it easy to fire so-called “underperforming workers”, this too finds clear expression in the calls for labour reforms from National Treasury and the National Planning Commission, which has now found their way to labour law amendments, d) The DA calls for private-public partnerships, which have also been embraced by the ANC-led government (the bad e-tolls idea is a private-public partnership!), and e) The DA calls for no change in the macroeconomic framework of inflation targeting, which the ANC-led government has faithfully maintained. Even the so-called “counter-cyclical” macroeconomic policy and the way it is implemented are taken from the DA! We can go on and on and even quote passages that look like cut and paste.
115. Now we ask ourselves, who is oppositional to what? COSATU is not afraid and is bold to say we are oppositional to DA policies being implemented under the cloak of the ANC. The stance of COSATU is against the DA-type policies of the ANC-led government. The ANC leadership in turn, is oppositional to the resolutions of the ANC and the Alliance, by allowing DA policies to be implemented under its watch. Now that is being oppositional to the NDR hence the NDR has produced the depressing statics above.

k) Analyse all formations not just COSATU

116. It is also revealing that the section entitled “Renewal of the Alliance and Sectoral Work among the Motive Forces” discusses the trade union movement at length whilst some of the subjective weaknesses of other components of the Mass Democratic Movement either receive only a mention or completely evade the paper’s radar. COSATU’s analysis of the Alliance, in particular the subjective weaknesses of the SACP, the vanguard of the working class, in the current period, receive no attention at all from this paper.

l) Need to analyse what has happened to other liberation movements who became aloof and arrogant

117. Finally, the paper gives only a cursory and ultimately unsatisfactory consideration of the questions we posed in our previous CEC about the history and political revolutionary life-span of other liberation movements throughout the continent and beyond:

118. How did they survive or fail the litmus test of being the revolutionary torchbearers of their own societies? At what point did they lose the moral and revolutionary compass and why? What made them reach the pathetic levels of ZANU-PF today, which is the epitome of revolutionary failure and disappointment of the worst order? Is it inevitable that upon the assumption of power, liberation movements suffer the tragedy of moral and political decay naturally?
119. This is particularly relevant at a time when the democratic advances made in last year's popular uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East are being reversed.
120. The Policy Conference ought to seriously engage this discussion, with openness, self-criticism and frankness. Anything to the contrary only delays us in adequately responding to the challenges we face and nipping some of these corrosive tendencies in the bud.

Class issues

121. The ANC has historically been a revolutionary and anti-imperialist movement which fought against the exploitation of workers. The ANC has to recognise the class nature of society, the irreconcilable conflict of class interests between workers and employers, and the power relations within it. These lie at the heart of all the problems we have identified. Corruption in particular is not confined to the public sector but has its roots in the inherently corrupt capitalist system.

Conclusion

122. Its limitations notwithstanding, this paper is a candid and bold admission that the ANC's values of selflessness and service to the people are being eroded by some of the corrosive practices engulfing the movement today. This is not a particularly novel observation, as conference after conference of the ANC makes such observations and commitments to reversing these corrosive tendencies. The real test lies in the ability of the organisation to implement its own resolution and thus far we have been presented with lofty ideals and resolutions without the much needed action in terms of implementation. Implementing previous ANC resolutions on organisational renewal, particularly those pertaining to corruption and conflicts of interests, is the kernel to renewing popular confidence in the movement and building the ANC as a party of the future, leaving a durable legacy for future generations.