



Left Pic: COPE women representatives from the nine provinces meeting in Joburg to establish party interim women structure.
Right: Representatives from North West Districts converge in Klerksdorp to appoint interim provincial structure.

DEAR MEMBERS AND VOTERS OF THE CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE.

I am pleased to share the latest developments within our party. This newsletter highlights the significant progress we are making despite overcoming enormous challenges. We have recommitted ourselves to returning our party to its rightful place in South Africa's political landscape.

Over the past 5 months since the fateful elections, we have initiated the process to strengthen our grassroots structures, and foster unity among our members. This is important work attitude to rebuild our beloved party.

Our policy development should focus on sustainable solutions for socio-economic progress. We continue to advocate for social justice, economic empowerment, and equitable access to resources, to garner widespread support.

As we move forward, we remain steadfast in our mission to build a prosperous and inclusive South Africa. With your continued support, we will overcome the challenges ahead and achieve our goals.

Together, we shall overcome.

Erick Mohlapanaswi:
Acting General Secretary

1. THE REBUILDING PROCESS

Since the CNC resolution to rebuild and reposition COPE, the process has been proceeding steadily, and our party members have taken the work seriously.

Broad optimism, enthusiasm and energy have been unleashed in all parts of the country to rebuild and reposition our party. Indeed, the COPE brand is still strong among the country's voters. It has been shown that all that needs to be done is to have political programmes and work harder.

1 A. COPE WOMEN'S CHAPTER

During the COPE post-NPE workshop on June 15, 2024, in Bloemfontein, several women who attended the workshop met to discuss strengthening the COPE Women Chapter.

They believe that this chapter is significant in ensuring that women also participate and have a voice in the progressive work of the Party.

After that meeting, women from all over the provinces were busy recruiting and trying to organise themselves. Therefore, on 24 August 2024, representatives of COPE women from all nine provinces gathered in Roodepoort to establish an interim national structure of the COPE Women's Chapter.

A Convenor was appointed to steer the process of launching the fully-fledged structure in line with the party's constitution.

The next CNC meeting will discuss the developments, decide how to proceed, and approve the structure.

1 B. NORTH WEST PROVINCE

The North West CPC became dysfunctional about two years ago for various reasons. This resulted in the province not having representation in the national structure and hampered the party's work in the province. It also went into the last 29 May elections without proper coordination. This was a concern for the CNC, and some efforts were made to correct the situation.

On 16 August 2024, representatives from all the Districts of the North West province met in Klerksdorp to discuss the state of organisation, appoint an interim provincial structure to organise work in the province and prepare for a Provincial Congress.

An interim provincial structure was appointed, consisting of a Convenor, Coordinator, Treasurer, Secretary for Membership, Secretary for Communication, and Secretary for Elections.

The following CNC will discuss the developments, decide the way forward, and approve the structure.

2. BUILDING A SOLID AND VIBRANT COPE FOR THE FUTURE

No party can exist without vibrant membership and structures. To all our dedicated COPE leaders,

Your commitment and hard work are the backbone of our party. As we strive to build a vibrant and compelling political movement, we must focus on recruiting new members and strengthening our structures at every level. Remember, our strength lies in our unity and shared vision for a better South Africa.

In these challenging times, integrity and honesty must be our guiding principles. We must lead by example, demonstrating the values that COPE stands for. By being transparent, accountable, and dedicated to the well-being of our communities, we can inspire others to join our cause.

Let's work together to build a party that genuinely represents the people. Together, we can create an inclusive movement that is just and focused on building prosperity for all. Stay strong, stay united, and continue

3. GNU 100-DAY PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

COPE Position Statement on the 100 Days of the GNU and the Current Socio-Economic and Political Crisis the Government of National Unity (GNU) marks 100 days, celebrated only by its minority beneficiaries. Ordinary citizens face brutal austerity measures, denying them essential services.

Big capital interests drive the GNU, perpetuating inequality, exclusion, and hardship for the poor, unemployed, and vulnerable. While the privileged minority enjoys wealth and influence, 9 million South Africans survive on the meagre R350 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant. This grant is a band-aid on a flawed economic system that denies sustainable opportunities.

Unemployment is over 32.9%, with youth unemployment around 60%. Public services are crumbling, crime is rampant, healthcare is failing, and an education crisis looms with teacher retrenchments. The government has failed to address the water crisis, leaving millions without clean drinking water. The GNU shows no commitment to transforming the economy dominated by monopolies, fuelling deindustrialisation and neglecting small businesses.

Instead of uplifting the majority, the focus remains on power and serving neoliberal entities and multinational corporations. COPE stands firm for socio-economic justice, equity, and inclusion for all South Africans, advocating for an inclusive economy that benefits the majority, not just the elite.

4. FREE STATE COPE TAKES THE CHALLENGE OF CONTESTING BY-ELECTIONS

Following the CNC resolution to contest municipal by-elections where feasible, the COPE Free State took up the challenge and contested at Setsoto Local Municipality (Clocolan) on 7 August 2024

The local COPE activists developed a campaign plan to guide them in the campaign work. This initiative was helpful because everyone knew what needed to be done, when, and how. The party supported the effort by making an amount of money available to run the campaign. At the end of the campaign, the provincial structure submitted a comprehensive report with beneficial recommendations for improving the planning and execution of a by-election campaign.

These recommendations can also help during future by-elections in other parts of the country.

We are stronger together. Although the COPE candidate did not win, the party reconnected with the local people on the ground, and valuable lessons were learned.

They showed that where there is a will, there is a way. We have taken small steps which, with more effort and focus, will multiply to become more effective and return our party to a formidable position.