

## **Solidarity statement of the PFDJ at the 53<sup>rd</sup> National Conference of the ANC**

We feel great honor to participate in this historic conference. The ANC has been an inspiration to national liberation movements all over Africa and beyond. The centenary of the ANC gives us the opportunity to look back to weigh objectively our historical journey and look forward and articulate a vision that could lead our struggle to build a better future for the peoples of Africa.

The African peoples and their descendants have suffered for centuries under the exploitative and dehumanizing system of Slavery, Colonial Racism and Imperialism. The struggle for human dignity and self-determination has been long and difficult. Though the anti-colonial national struggle has achieved its first objective of formal independence from foreign rule, in the majority of cases, it has remained only that, formal without substance. It has not provided a foundation for meaningful political independence, self-reliant economic development based on social justice, social harmony and stability, and a national cultural renaissance. Hence the post-independence period has markedly fallen short in achieving our peoples' aspirations for national independence, economic development, social justice and dignity. Therefore Africa with all the potential of its people and abundant natural resources remains poor, weak, fragmented and marginalized. Under these circumstances there is only one choice: The struggle has to continue.

But in order for the struggle to continue and achieve its objectives, we have to draw lessons from the experiences of the past five decades and articulate a clear ideological and political line which can lead us to achieve our objectives.

In Eritrea we believe the struggle for African self-determination is pivotal to the success of the anti-imperialist national project and economic development in Africa. Till we as Africans conquer the power to determine our own future and rely on ourselves to solve our historic problems, we can not be masters of our own houses and claim our rightful place in the world. As one African writer put it, it was free Japan and not colonized India that could overcome its economic backwardness and industrialize in a historically very short period. It is evident that we are far behind this point. The victory over colonialism has proven to be short-lived. In many cases the gains of formal independence and sovereignty have only legitimized and provided a pig-leaf to the subtle process through which we have been losing our self-determination

In the post- Cold War period we have been confronted with new challenges and great obstacles. The new wave of neo-liberal democratization has proven to be no more than, as one African writer succinctly characterized it, the democratization of disempowerment. It has made the ideological and political situation more difficult by simultaneously legitimizing, on the one hand, the marginalization of the people, and on the other, the power of the few who are allied as junior partners to the former colonial powers. In reality neither formal independence nor formal democracy has meant much to

the masses of working people in Africa. The African peoples are still powerless. The national anti-imperialist project remains unfinished, and in many cases, shattered.

Therefore, we need a second struggle for independence, for self-determination, for economic and social emancipation, for self-reliant development, for a self-sufficient national culture. For this historic struggle to succeed all progressive and popular forces in Africa have to tackle the absence of Ideology, which Fanon before half a century saw as the great danger threatening Africa.

We agree with the ANC that the core of the second transformation must be changing the economic structures in the interests of the broad majority of our people. For as one prominent African philosopher from Cameroon, Marcien Towa wrote:

*“Neither religion, nor ethics or the law can suffice to assure among human beings equality and fraternity. Historical experience shows that those who have at their disposal sufficient superiority on the physical plane cannot long resist the temptation of abusing it to dominate and exploit the feebler ones. Peace and fraternity cannot be established among human beings without a relative equality on the level of material power.”*

We have been talking about the coming African Renaissance for many years now. The African Renaissance will not happen without fundamentally transforming our dependent backward economies which underpins all range of relationships of dependency. Without building the basis for material power, mastering science and technology, participating in the production of knowledge, and consequently, building an advanced modern economy which can guarantee a high quality of material and cultural life for our people, the African Renaissance will remain only a dream.

In this struggle for socio-economic freedom, the role of South Africa and the ANC is, needless to say, crucial. This leading role will be one of the decisive factors in determining the outcome of the struggle in Africa. We support the ANC in its struggle to lead the people of South Africa towards socio-economic freedom. Eritrea under the leadership of its liberation movement the EPLF/PFDJ will continue its struggle and play its role with all progressive anti-imperialist forces in Africa for socio-economic freedom.

Victory to the masses  
People’s Front for Democracy and Justices (Eritrea)  
15 December, 2012