

Peace Afrika

VOL. 20 // NO.2 | November 2017

ENGAGING YOUTH AND CHILDREN IN THE BUILDING OF AN ETHICAL NATION





CONTENTS

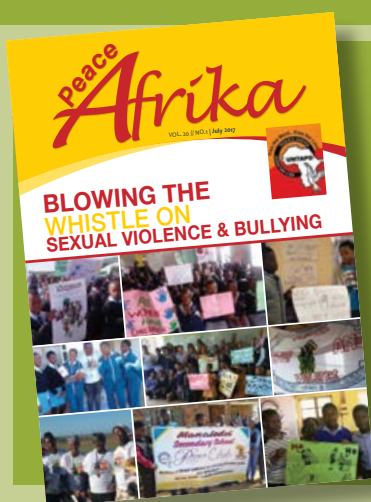
1. UMTAPO'S PROGRAMMATIC WORK

- SeVISSA: SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS IN SA 3
 - Eastern Cape 3
 - Limpopo 6
- PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS & ANTI-RACISM EDUCATION 7
- CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION 9
- UMTAPO STUDENT MOVEMENT 16
- ETHICAL GOVERNANCE & PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY 17
- STEVE BIKO TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION PROJECT 20
 - Strini Moodley Lecture (UKZN) 21
 - Neville Alexander Conference (UJ) 22
 - Steve Biko Seminar (DUT) 26

2. SPECIAL FOCUS

- THOMAS SANKARA 27
- CHE GUEVARA 29

Our Previous Issue



PEACE AFRIKA // VOL. 20 // NO. 1 July 2017

Published by UMTAPO and funded by the C S Mott Foundation.
Articles, information and comments are welcome, and should be submitted to:

The Director,
P O Box 37674, Overport 4067
South Africa
Email: info@umtapocentre.org.za
www.umtapocentre.org.za
Twitter: @UMTAPO86

Design and layout:  Artworks | www.artworks.co.za

UMTAPO'S PROGRAMMATIC WORK

SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA (SEVISSA)

SeVISSA (Eastern Cape)

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund has partnered with Comic Relief and local organisations to coordinate a programme called Sexual Violence against Girls in Schools in South Africa (SeVISSA). The project will be executed over a period of five years.

The intention of the programme is to mitigate the impact of violence, bullying, abuse and exploitation of learners in schools and communities with a special focus on the effects these have on girls' education and their ability to reach their optimal potential in life.

The programme is implemented in four provinces:

- Eastern Cape
- Western Cape
- Limpopo
- Gauteng

Each province has a consortium made up of a lead and partner organisations. The lead organisation will administer the funds for the consortium and be accountable for reporting to the donors.

In the Eastern Cape, UMTAPO is the lead organisation and the project is focused on 16 villages around Peddie that fall under the Ngqushwa Local Municipality and Amathole District Municipality.

The third-year cycle of the SeVISSA project ended in July 2017 and arrangements for the fourth year are currently being put in place. Some final activities that took place in July 2017 were:

Stakeholders' Workshop

As part of the collective effort to deal with sexual violence against women and children, relevant stakeholders from the



communities/villages and the province as a whole, were invited to attend a workshop on 24 July 2017 at the Mpekweni Beach Hotel. Unfortunately, the attendance was poor, which is an indictment on the level of commitment of stakeholders to the serious issues at hand. Of course, the work of the EC SeVISSA coalition continues and further attempts will be made to bring other stakeholders on board.

Evaluation Workshop

In its continuous action-reflection approach, UMTAPO convened an Evaluation Workshop for the Peace Clubs, which took place on 26 July 2017 at Darban Community Hall. All the schools in the UMTAPO SeVISSA programme were invited (17 schools). Learners participated in deciding what action to take and to plan for its implementation. For example, Peace Clubs decided to hold school campaigns to highlight sexual violence and the need to Speak Out!





The change in attitude towards girls has become visible in schools according to participants and the number of learners joining the Peace Clubs are constantly increasing.

Community Action

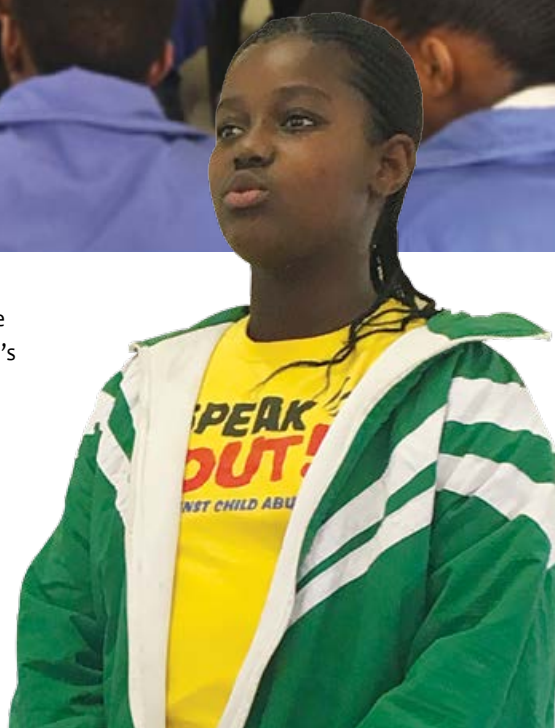
UMTAPO's community structures, namely the UMTAPO Women's Coalition (UWC) and the Ubuntu Community Forum (UCF), are becoming vocal and known in their communities. Whenever there is an issue in the community, the structures take action (see case studies).

Workshops took place in the following villages in response to requests from the community:

- Gcinisa (at the Gcinisa North Community Hall on 14 July 2017)
- Qeto (at the Qeto Tribal House Hall on 17 July 2017)
- Feni (at the Feni Location Community Hall on 31 July 2017)

A further Community Leaders' meeting took place at Qeto Tribal House on 27 July 2017 to examine the benefits of the programme to the community and how the tribal authorities could play an effective role in supporting the programme.

Feni location had not been one of the targeted areas for UMTAPO's intervention, but calls from the community were responded to after they had heard about the programme in other villages. Feni is populated by predominantly females and the rate of sexual violence and abuse is alarming.





#WhistleBlowing Village Campaign on Sexual Violence

At 2am on 5 August 2017, a young woman was raped and beaten up in Darban Location. Community members who heard the screams blew the whistle, which awoke other community members to come to her assistance. Athini Nqumza, UMTAPO's field worker who was also woken by the whistle, organised for the young person to be taken to the local hospital because waiting for an ambulance takes too long.

The whistle campaigns have been a success in other ways as well. In Crossroads and Ndlovini villages, whistles were used to save burning homes. When noticing unusual fire and smoke, community members blew the whistle with the result that others came out to help extinguish the fires.

Following the village campaign in Darban Location, UMTAPO's Ubuntu Community Forum adopted a soccer team of young community men/boys, some of whom were transformed drug users and criminals, who now felt that it was time to make a change in their lives.

Noxolo's (*) Story

Noxolo is now a Peace Club member in one of the villages. While attending a celebration event in the area prior to the SeVISSA project, Noxolo was attacked and sexually abused by a member of the community. Noxolo felt violated and blamed herself for what had happened to her, living with her trauma in silence. With the opportunity to attend a leadership camp facilitated by UMTAPO for primary schools, Noxolo found the strength and courage to break the silence and speak out about her ordeal. UMTAPO's community structures have provided added support for Noxolo and the family.

(*) Not the real name

Participant at the Women's Seminar in Gcinisa

"The raping/sexual violation of women is a huge problem in our community. I was attacked at my home: I was raped, stabbed and left for dead by children that I knew but when I needed my community to support me most, I was blamed for being a drunkard, which made me feel embarrassed and that is when I stopped participating in any community activities. When my neighbour told me of UMTAPO and the words of hope they had shared with them at the first workshop, I was hopeful and that's why I came today to support people who have been victims to speak out and not care/focus on what the community will say when their stories have been heard, but to rather stand strong so we can save others."



UMTAPO participants to the Girl's Symposium from schools in Peddie.

SeVISSA Girls' Symposium

The symposium in Gauteng was intended to provide a space and opportunity for girls, women and males involved in the SeVISSA programme to present progress and share lessons on what has been happening through the implementation. The symposium was to look into three thematic areas under the main theme 'Exposing Invisible Scars of Women and Girls'.

Twelve UMTAPO Peace Club members from Peddie were selected to attend the NMCF-initiated Girls' Symposium on 10-13 July 2017. The symposium was held at Wits University in Johannesburg. All four provinces that are part of the SeVISSA project participated. The Eastern Coalition presented a poster on 'What stops girls from reporting sexual violence in schools?'

For the majority of the group, it was their first time out of their province and flying on an airplane.

SeVISSA (Limpopo)

UMTAPO's involvement in the third-year SeVISSA project in Limpopo with partner

organisations, Far North and Molteno Project, had mostly been completed by June 2017. A netball and soccer tournament

involving SeVISSA schools in Tshisaulu and Madodonga took place as a final activity that highlighted gender-based violence.



PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND ANTI-RACISM EDUCATION (PHARE) – Addressing Violence and Sexual Abuse in Schools

The main purpose of this programme, funded by the National Lottery Commission, is to promote peace, social cohesion and nation-building. The more specific objectives are to:

- Develop a holistic response to dealing with sexual abuse and violence in schools;
- Establish youth/children's clubs to promote peace and human rights in schools and children's homes;
- Create the conditions in schools and communities for a values-driven educational model based on ubuntu; and
- Change the mindsets, particularly among young people, in order to revive the spirit of ubuntu in schools and communities

Since only a third of the requested funding was received, adjustments had to be made and instead of the envisaged 50 training camps for learners, educators, SGB members, and other stakeholders, only 12 leadership camps were possible, largely for the most vulnerable and crucial group: the learners. This was divided into five camps in

Limpopo, three for the Eastern Cape, and four in KwaZulu-Natal.

KwaZulu-Natal

A leadership camp was organised for three schools from Inchanga on 4-6 August 2017 at Tre Fontane, Mariannhill. The schools that participated were:

- Inchanga Primary School
- Fredville Primary School
- Ximba Senior Primary School

The facilitator of the camp was Pumzile Yika, assisted by Siyakudumisa Mofokeng.

A second camp took place simultaneously on 4-6 August 2017 for the following schools from KwaNdengezi:



- KwaManzini Primary School
- Manganga Primary School
- Bhongo Primary School

The camp was facilitated by Xolile Ntuli, assisted by Zethembiso Sisi Mkhize.

A third camp was held on 3-5 November 2017 at the Tre Fontane Centre in Mariannhill for schools from KwaNdengezi and KwaNyuswa.

Limpopo

The camps had already occurred but follow-up visits to schools took place.

Eastern Cape

Peace club leadership camps for primary learners were held on the 28-30 July 2017 and 18-20 August 2017 in Chintsa. The workshops were facilitated by Khumbulani Yekani and Zukiswa Mpayipeli and the following schools participated:

- Qongqotha Primary School
- Mlakalaka Primary School
- Fort Murray Primary School
- Masikhanyise Primary School
- Zwelitsha Primary School
- Ilitha Primary School



Tshiawelo Secondary School Peace Club in Limpopo.

CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION

The project, funded by the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, is located in rural areas/townships in KwaZulu-Natal: KwaNyuswa and Shongweni Dam, within the eThekweni Metro Municipality, and Groutville, Thethe, Thembeni, and Melville within the KwaDukuza Local Municipality in the iLembe District Municipality.

The Leadership Camps that are held are geared towards enhancing self-worth, understanding societal issues, and engaging in building a better society. UMTAPO has been conducting these for a number of years in schools around the country.

The specific objectives of the project are to:

- Establish Peace Clubs in schools to build child leadership and actively campaign for a safer learning environment;
- Create joint stakeholder networks

in schools to ensure collaboration among parents, educators, community stakeholders and learners, and that perpetrators can be exposed; and

- Engage government departments and Chapter 9 institutions to make sure that action is taken against abuse and the abusers in schools.

Leadership Camps

Two leadership camps were conducted for six schools from KwaNyuswa on 28-30 July 2017 at Tre Fontane, Mariannhill in KwaZulu-Natal:

- Mphumela Primary School
- Mzamo Primary School

- KwaMnamatha Primary School
- Mbhanana Zenex Primary School
- Amaqadi Primary School
- KwaNyuswa Primary School

Forty learners and six educators participated in the camps that were facilitated by Pumzile Yika, assisted by Zethembiso Sisi Mkhize; and, Xolile Ntuli, assisted by Siyakudumisa Mofokeng.

A third camp took place on 18-20 August 2017 for:

- Siyjabula High School,
- Kwa-Ntebeni High School
- Thabela High School

They listed the effects of child abuse as:

- Children lose self-confidence and are mostly scared;
- Abused children leave homes and end up living on the streets;
- Some children end up committing suicide; and
- Abuse leads to lack of concentration in class and victims of abuse may become aggressive.

Most of the participants have seen abuse happen. One saw parents throwing a baby at each other during a fight.



It turned out that sexual violence and bullying are serious problems at these schools. In schools, females are taken advantage of by male students and male educators. There are an increasing number

of students dating male educators, making this a norm in most of the KwaNyuswa High Schools.

Bullying among learners and between educators and learners are common in these

schools, according to the participants. At Thabela High School, bullying is mostly by drug users at the school and the school has even gone through a phase where educators themselves were bullying one another.



Joint Stakeholder/ Community Meetings

Following the first stakeholder meeting in KwaDukuza, two meetings were convened in KwaNyuswa and one in Thembeni. The purpose of the meetings/workshops is to engage community stakeholders in the programme so that there could be support structures for the safety of the children in the schools of that area.

KwaNyuswa

Two stakeholder/community meetings were held in KwaNyuswa. One was at KwaNyuswa Lower Area at the Mphumela Primary School Hall on 17 September 2017, and the other at KwaNyuswa Upper Area at the Mnamatha Primary Hall on 16 October 2017.

The issues raised at both meetings had a lot of similarities, and common resolutions were:

- Parents appreciated being involved for the first time in a school project and they requested the schools to learn from UMTAPO's approach.
- Parents suggested that it would be much better if UMTAPO would invite the community at large in this form of gathering since this workshop needs the attention of every community member.
- Teachers also appreciated the effort that UMTAPO has put in, in a short space of time, and their work is much easier now. Therefore, teachers suggested that the programme should start from the beginning of the year and the number of learners who go to the camp should be increased.

- Teachers also suggested that UMTAPO should come to schools to give some brief training to those who didn't go to the camp.
- Parents and stakeholders suggested that a programme like this should be extended to the community at large, due to the fact that most of the cases are happening in the community where a child spends most of the time.
- Both meetings felt that there was a need for a mass meeting to engage on the issues.
- Crime is a major issue since there is no police station in the area. Cases of crime are not reported because it is costly to report to Inchanga police station. The CPF, in both meetings, indicated that they would follow up.
- It was also indicated that the school safety is compromised due to the school security guards not being trained and this should be taken up since it is one of the major problems in school increasing chances of bringing drugs and dangerous weapons to schools.

Learners have also asked the security guards to do random searches in their schools, as they do not feel safe.

Thembeni

The workshop, which took place on 12 October 2017, was attended by representatives from the following stakeholders:

- KwaDukuza SAPS (Child Protection Unit & Communications)
- KwaDukuza Sports and Recreation
- KwaDukuza Community Safety
- Department of Health
- Parents
- Educators (Mbekamuzi, Melville, Aldenville and Dr BW Vilakazi)
- SGBs

In coming up with solutions that could help alleviate the problems, the following were identified:

- Improve relationship with children and communicate with them regardless of their gender



- Educate other parents on how to treat children
- Engage the community: ward committees, CCGs, CPFs, councillors, etc.
- Expose perpetrators
- Increase security at schools
- Revive ubuntu within our communities
- Pay attention to what children watch on TV
- Search children's school bags occasionally
- Allow children to talk openly about issues such as sexual abuse and bullying
- Ensure that schools do not release children to strangers. Screening is important.

Peace Club Evaluation Workshops

As a result of a limited budget, the evaluation workshop was held in each of the two major targeted areas: KwaNyuswa and KwaDukuza.

The KwaNyuswa Evaluation Workshop took place on 18 October 2017 at the

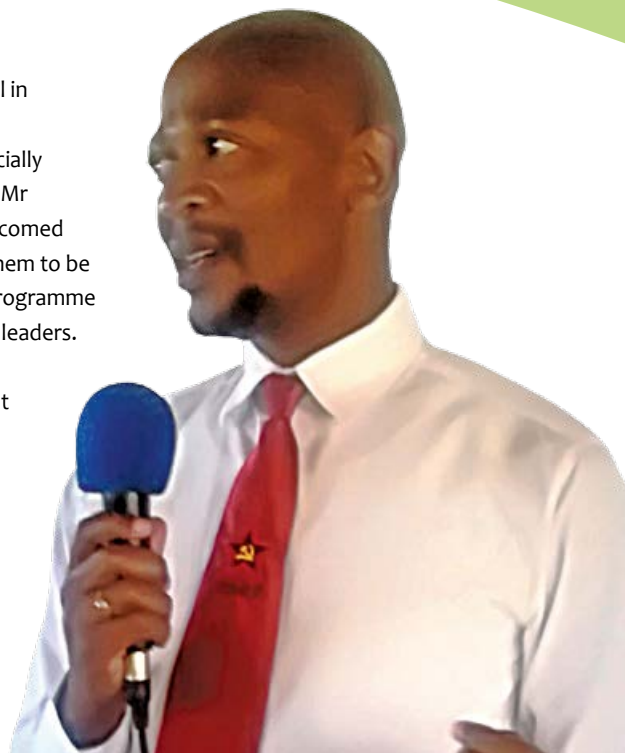
Bambanani Community Hall in KwaNyuswa.

The workshop was officially opened by ward councillor Mr Mthetheleli Sibisi, who welcomed learners and encouraged them to be involved in this powerful programme that recognises children as leaders. He said that Peace Club activities are very important as they raise awareness on sexual abuse against children and bullying. He also said that to see young people involved in activities that transform their schools brings hope and he anticipates that the activities that they initiated will change the lives of many learners.

Representatives from the SA Human Rights Commission, the Community Policing Forum and the Department of Community Safety attended the programme. They gave

short inputs on the work that they do and pledged their support for the peace clubs.

Peace Club executive committees from the schools listed below participated in the evaluation (one school, Siyajabula High



School was not able to attend):

- Thabela High School
- Kwa-Ntebeni Comprehensive High School
- KwaNyuswa Senior Primary School
- St Lawrence Primary School
- Mbhanana Zenex Primary School
- Amaqadi Primary School
- Umzamo Primary School
- Mphumela Combined School
- KwaMnamatha Primary School

The enthusiasm, passion and organised manner in which the learners presented their reports showed the impact of the visible model of child participation and the promotion of peace, human rights, anti-bullying, anti-corruption and anti-racism in their schools. The level of leadership and confidence among the learners to raise complex issues and possible solutions was the highlight of the day.

Learners planned for an Anti-Bullying Campaign at Schools in 2018 and a Day of Action against Corruption on 9 December 2017.

The KwaDukuza Peace Club Evaluation Workshop took place on 23 October 2017 at the Groutville Community Hall.

Six primary schools from KwaDukuza, who initiated Peace Clubs at their schools after going on a weekend camp, participated in the evaluation.

- Aldenville Primary School
- Dr BW Vilakazi Primary School
- Mbekamuzi Primary School
- Melville Primary School
- Radha Roopsingh Primary School
- Tinley Manor Primary School

Representatives from the SAPS Social Crime Unit and the Department of Education School Safety Programme were present. An Anti-Bullying Campaign was launched, with a programme of action drawn up for 2018.

It was evident from the various presentations, poems and reports that the camps have had a positive impact on the lives of learners. Their confidence and knowledge of speaking out against child abuse and bullying at schools showed leadership and great courage.





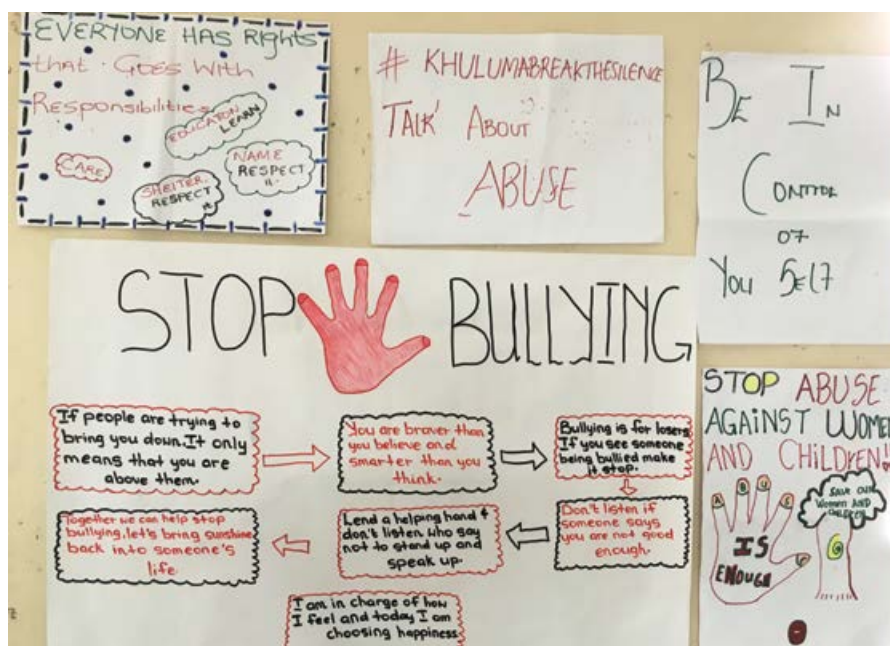


Anti-Bullying Campaign in Schools

An important aspect of the Peace Club Evaluation Workshops has been the launch of an Anti-Bullying Campaign in Schools

The Campaign is scheduled to commence at the beginning of the school term in 2018. However, in preparation, through the Peace Clubs, the schools currently involved will get each school to:

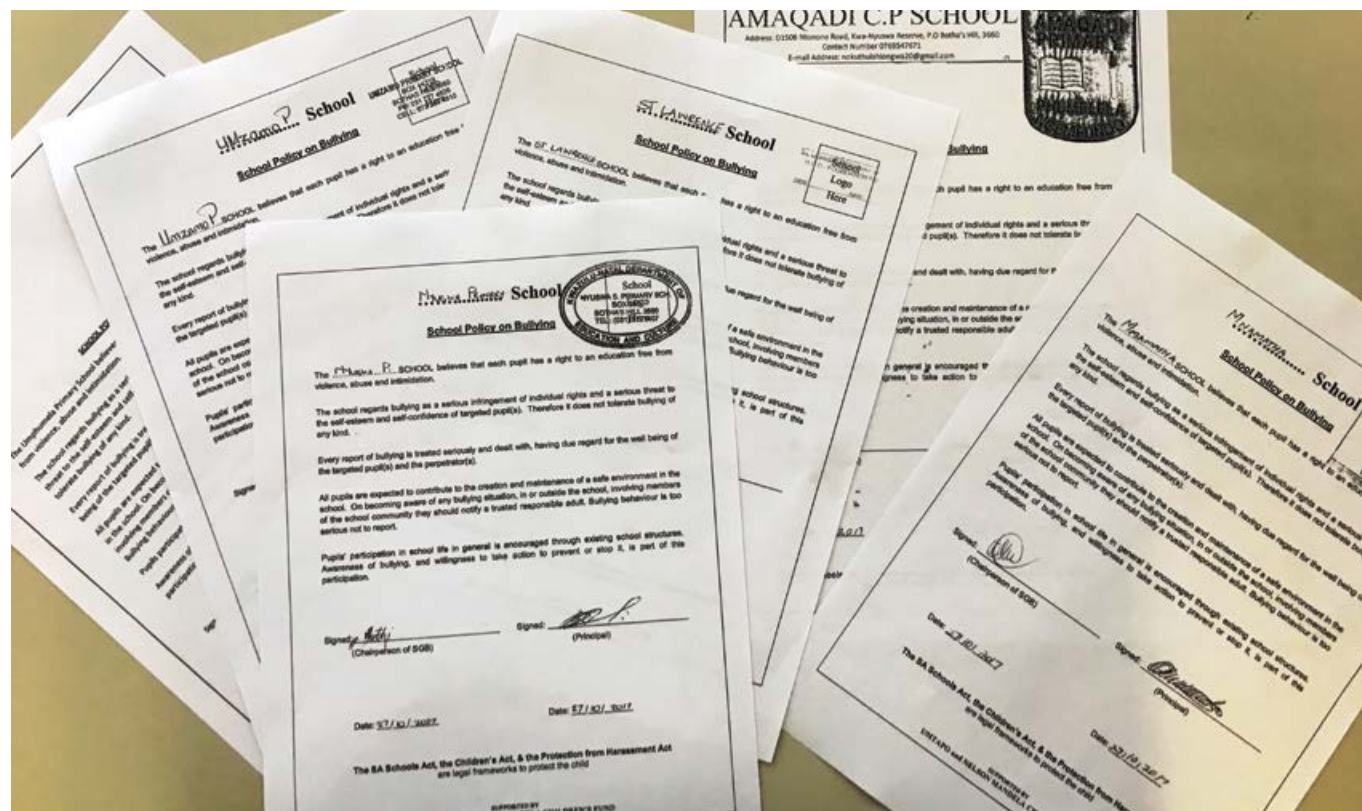
- Adopt a school policy on bullying;



- Prepare posters on anti-bullying to be submitted to the UMTAPO office before the closure of the 2017 school term. The ideas generated from the posters will be condensed into one National Campaign Poster for use in schools throughout the country in 2018; and

- Examine the legal framework that protects children against bullying.

Following the evaluation workshops, most schools have formally signed the School Policy on Bullying indicating a genuine interest and enthusiasm in participating in this initiative.



UMTAPO STUDENT MOVEMENT (USM)

Since this is examination time at most universities, only a few activities took place. Some updates are as follows:

USM at UKZN (Edgewood)

At the University of KwaZulu-Natal Edgewood Campus, a gender-based violence event took place on 20 October 2017.

Sifundo Shange gave an input referring to statistics that he received from the Housing department and the Campus Clinic with regard to the number of women who are being attacked on campus on a daily basis. Consequently, a resolution was taken to embark on a GBV campaign to raise awareness and promote proper and more effective reporting of cases.

The USM Annual General Meeting was postponed to the beginning of 2018.

USM at UKZN (Howard College)

The USM had their annual general meeting on 24 October 2015 and a new interim committee was elected to prepare for 2018 as most members of the outgoing committee were in their final year. The new committee is:

- Chairperson: Thamsanqa Mbhamali
- Deputy Chairperson: Khanya Manqele
- Secretary: Sthandiwe mMkhize
- Deputy Secretary: Nombulelo Ndimande
- Finance: Nonkululeko Ndlovu
- Recruitment Officer: Kwanele Mpungose

Strategic Planning Meeting In Gauteng

Using the occasion of the Neville Alexander Conference at University of Johannesburg, a Strategic Planning Workshop was held on 9 September 2017. Representatives from UWC, UNIZULU, UKZN (Howard College), UKZN (Edgewood), UJ, Wits, and University of Stellenbosch attended the strategic

planning workshop at Auckland Park Lodge, where they gave reports on what had been done on their campuses, outlined challenges and examined resolutions.

In addition, the standardising of certain national activities and formats were addressed, including the administration of such activities.

USM at UWC

A general meeting was held on 14 October to give feedback on what was discussed at the strategic planning workshop. They also planned a closing event on 10 November on campus where the USM will be officially closing the year and electing the new executive members for 2018.

USM at UJ

A recruitment drive took place at the University of Johannesburg (Auckland Park Campus) on 26-27 July 2017. UMTAPO partnered with the UJ Black Lawyers Association since it was not registered on the campus.

62 members were recruited during the two days some whom went on to attend the training course in September 2017. Following the training, a resolution was taken for members to make sure that all necessary documentation was prepared for application for recognition of the USM at the beginning of 2018. Ongoing recruitment

would in the meantime continue.

A task team was formed with Sibusiso Khalishwayo as the chairperson and Sinanziwe Ndlovu as an acting secretary with additional members including Imithayelanga Kama, Donald Mosia, Bongani Masondo, and Floyd Ngwenya, who is the contact person for the Bunting Campus.

USM at UniZulu

The USM at UNIZULU held an Education workshop on 15 September 2017 to also get feedback from the two delegates who attended the Neville Alexandra Conference and the strategic planning workshop.



ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY: IN PURSUIT OF OUR COLLECTIVE DESTINY



In a unique programme, not only in South Africa but globally, UMTAPO has developed a training curriculum to enable young people in universities to embark on a journey towards building an ethical nation. The week-long training course on Democracy, Human Rights and Anti-Corruption targets a limited number of students from 15-20 universities around the country. The project is funded by the Embassy of Finland.

Students who graduate from universities will most likely be the future leaders in government, in the corporate world, within professional circles, and in general positions of power in society. It is in the interests of our collective destiny that we need to ensure that they inculcate the ethics and values that will contribute meaningfully to a society where the majority of the people benefit.

The first training course in this cycle of the project took place at Luiperdskloof Game Lodge in Bronkorspruit in Gauteng on 25-30 September 2017. Students from the University of Johannesburg, Wits University, and Tshwane University of Technology attended.

The course is a participatory journey that starts with the individual (self-reflection), moving onto the root causes of what has impacted on the individual and society, and then addressing the current situation and what is needed and expected from young people to build an ethical nation.

Included in this training were team-building activities that included a game drive and an outdoor exercise that focused on collective and participatory sharing of skills and creative decision-making.

For most participants, many of whom

were active student leaders on their campuses, the practical and participatory nature of the course was stimulating. They agreed almost unanimously, in their

evaluation at the end of the course, that they had gained valuable information and knowledge on the course and that the objectives of the course were achieved.



Group participation and the facilitation techniques and methods were very positively evaluated.

On starting the USM, most were eager to do so and some were not ready and wanted to start gradually conscientising their friends and other individuals.

The overwhelming response in terms of recommendation to UMTAPO was: to increase the length of the course.

The closing ceremony and certification held at the Auckland Lodge in Johannesburg on 30 September 2017 was a wonderfully intimate affair. The function was opened by UMTAPO Director Deena Soliar and chaired by a participant who was selected by the group, Ms Sinanziwe Ndlovu (UJ), while Thembeni Manana and Floyd Ngwenya were chosen as the speakers to represent the group.

The function commenced with a rendition of the decolonised national anthem by the whole group. Mr Ishmael Mkhabela, a stalwart of the BC movement, Chairperson of the Steve Biko Foundation, community development specialist and patron of UMTAPO, was the guest speaker.

The function ended with the certification process. Ms Tsakane Bok of the Embassy of Finland (funder of the project) handed out the certificates to culminate an exciting evening for the participants and guests.



Post-training comments from participant Nkululeko Mpakama

“Our experience went far beyond the stated discussion points, surpassed the state of merely analyzing society and landed directly into a solution phase to seek to change our current realities. We have realized our task, and as Marx puts it, ours is to change society.

*“The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways.
The point, however, is to change it.”*

UMTAPO has been to us one of many interventions as a vehicle to ignite young people to take charge and ownership of the current situation; to derive workable solutions inclusive of all spheres of society; and to ensure that we, as young people, define our own future now!

This to me remains a single step of a thousand miles as it has changed and revitalized my commitment to the struggle to define what our future should be. We will continue what we have started on the 25th of September 2017, and we will ensure that it goes beyond ourselves to influence our peers in all walks of life”.



Mr Ishmael
Mkhabela.



"I see myself as a different person from who I was a week ago. A week ago I knew nothing about UMTAPO. Now I wish I had heard about UMTAPO years ago. This programme did not only help me but it helped us as a collective. It made us better people. I would never talk about all of this without mentioning the passion, the love that we were given by the facilitators who sacrificed their week, their time with their families to be with us to make sure the struggle continues."

Floyd Ngwenya

SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

A STEVE BIKO TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION PROJECT

*In memory of
Mbulelo Mzamane, Neville Alexander, Oshadi Mangena and Strini Moodley*



This unique project will take the form of leadership camps/formation schools and political and transformative education workshops/lectures at different universities and communities. It will also include an online publication specifically on political education with contributions from various comrades and activists. The online publication will be published four times a year, each in memory of the four UMTAPO stalwarts mentioned above.

UMTAPO will work in co-operation with relevant departments at institutions and with its UMTAPO Student Movement (USM) branches to forge formal collaborations with institutions of higher learning.

In addition to its longstanding collaboration with the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) with which a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in June 2017, UMTAPO has signed a MOU with the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) at the University of Johannesburg and with the Oliver Tambo Chair of Human Rights at the University of Fort Hare.

Meetings have taken place with the Institute for Rural Development at the University of Venda and a formal MOU is in the process of being signed. Representations have also been made to the Durban University of Technology to renew their co-operation with UMTAPO and this is currently being negotiated.

The Strini Moodley Annual Memorial Lecture and the Annual Steve Biko Seminar

are incorporated under this project as part of the university collaboration.

The Strini Moodley Annual Memorial Lecture continues to be hosted by UKZN on any of its various campuses. The University of Johannesburg's CERT hosts the Neville Alexander Conference in collaboration with UMTAPO and its USM, and the DUT hosts the Steve Biko Seminar.

Other envisaged co-operation will include community engagement activities between the UNIVEN Institute for Rural Development and the UMTAPO Student Movement, as well as joint workshops between the Oliver Tambo Chair for Human Rights and the USM at the University of Fort Hare.

The online newsletter was launched in February 2017, which was dedicated to the late Professor Mbulelo Mzamane, who was a Board member of UMTAPO when he passed away in February 2014; the second edition in April was dedicated to Strini Moodley, founding member of UMTAPO, who passed away on 27 April 2006; and, the third edition in August 2017 was dedicated

to Dr Neville Alexander, UMTAPO patron and revolutionary educationist and socialist, who passed away in August 2012.

The fourth edition of the newsletter is dedicated to Dr Oshadi Mangena, patron of UMTAPO who passed away in September 2015.

The newsletter has received positive feedback from readers/activists and after its pilot year, it seems that this will become a permanent self-reliant project of UMTAPO.



2017 Strini Moodley Lecture

The 10th Annual Strini Moodley Memorial Lecture took place on 19 July 2017 at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Howard College campus.

Dr Navi Pillay, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Judge at the International Criminal Court and gender activist, highlighted that corruption hits hard on the poor and vulnerable in the country, directly impacting on their human rights and denying them their dignity.

Pillay emphasised that corruption plagued not only public offices, but businesses, state-owned enterprises, and the sports arena, among many other sectors.

"Today, you cannot read a newspaper, watch television, listen to the radio or surf social media without hearing or reading about corruption. Let us be clear, corruption kills. The money stolen through corruption every year is enough to feed the world's hungry 80 times over," said Pillay.

Pillay spoke about the impact of corruption on South Africa's constitutional democracy and stressed the global nature of corruption. "Corruption compromises the State's ability to deliver services."

Pillay, who was Moodley's lawyer, said that the renowned activist and founding member of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa was a "truly committed freedom fighter and a pillar of integrity and honesty who would not have tolerated corruption – he would have acted against it."

Mphutlane wa Bofelo, a cultural and political activist and social critic, spoke on 'Reclaiming the Humanism of Socialism to Extinguish the Flames Engulfing the Country'.



Mphutlane wa Bofelo

Bofelo emphasised that the 'flames' referred to the "spontaneous, organic and organised resistance engulfing the country as exemplified by the Rhodes Must Fall, Fees Must Fall, popular land repossession actions and nationwide protests against the squeeze of the continuities of apartheid-capitalism."

He pointed out that "Socialism and humanism, to be specific, radical humanism, are two cups of the same litre or rather socialism minus humanism is socialism minus its core."

"This Socialist humanist ideal," he said, "fits like a hand-in-glove in the Black Consciousness idea that the oppressed people should be the agents, subjects and objects of their own liberation..."

Bofelo concluded with a list of practical things that could be done to deal with the flames engulfing the country and the globe:

1. Revitalising anti-sectarian radical popular education, civic education, worker education, worker culture and theatre for social transformation, centering these on the organic struggles and campaigns of the labour, student, youth, women and community organisations and using them to strengthen initiatives such as Fees Must Fall, Outsourcing Must Fall, Anti-eviction campaigns and popular protest for housing and land.
2. Exploration and experimentation with or consolidation of existing grassroots-based community development programmes and solidarity economy initiatives that tap into the principles and practices of eco-socialism and sustainable living approaches.
3. Identifying spaces within and outside of existing formal and informal education platforms and broader labour, civic and social movement platforms to explore and experiment with the ideals of a cooperative higher education and the building of a broader movement for transformation of public higher education from what Henry Giroux refers to as a 'bordered' or 'limited' enterprise to a 'borderless', socially and politically conscious sphere directed towards the project of democratisation and borderless pedagogy that moves across different sites – from schools to the alternative media – as part of a broader attempt to construct a critical formative culture that enables people to reclaim their voices, speak out, exhibit moral outrage and create

the social movements, tactics and public spheres that will reverse the growing tide of authoritarianism.

4. Explore the idea of bringing radical socialist and broader left groupings that are not beholden to the current neo-liberal state and capital around a National Socialist Forum that explores a common platform of action around issues of common agreement and interests that could include, among others:
 - (a) A series of workshops, seminars and campaigns to advocate for human, political, social and economic development policies and programmes that serve to radically democratise the society, the state and the economy and to move South Africa towards the nationalisation and socialisation of the primary means of wealth, the commanding heights of the economy and essential social services.
 - (b) A national summit on land redistribution, agrarian reform, sustainable industrial development and social and economic transformation aimed at consolidating and linking current struggles and campaigns on these issues and developing a cogent policy and political programme on them.
 - (c) An ongoing campaign and advocacy against gender-based violence that will include a series of gender and sexuality workshops and seminars at schools, universities, communities and workplaces as an educational initiative aimed at tackling the attitudes, practices and systemic and structural factors that account for the explosion of various forms of violence and oppression against women, children and theGBTQI community.
 - (d) A campaign for a popular constituent assembly that will do away with the sellout constitution that came out of the fraudulent Codesa process.

2017 Neville Alexander Conference

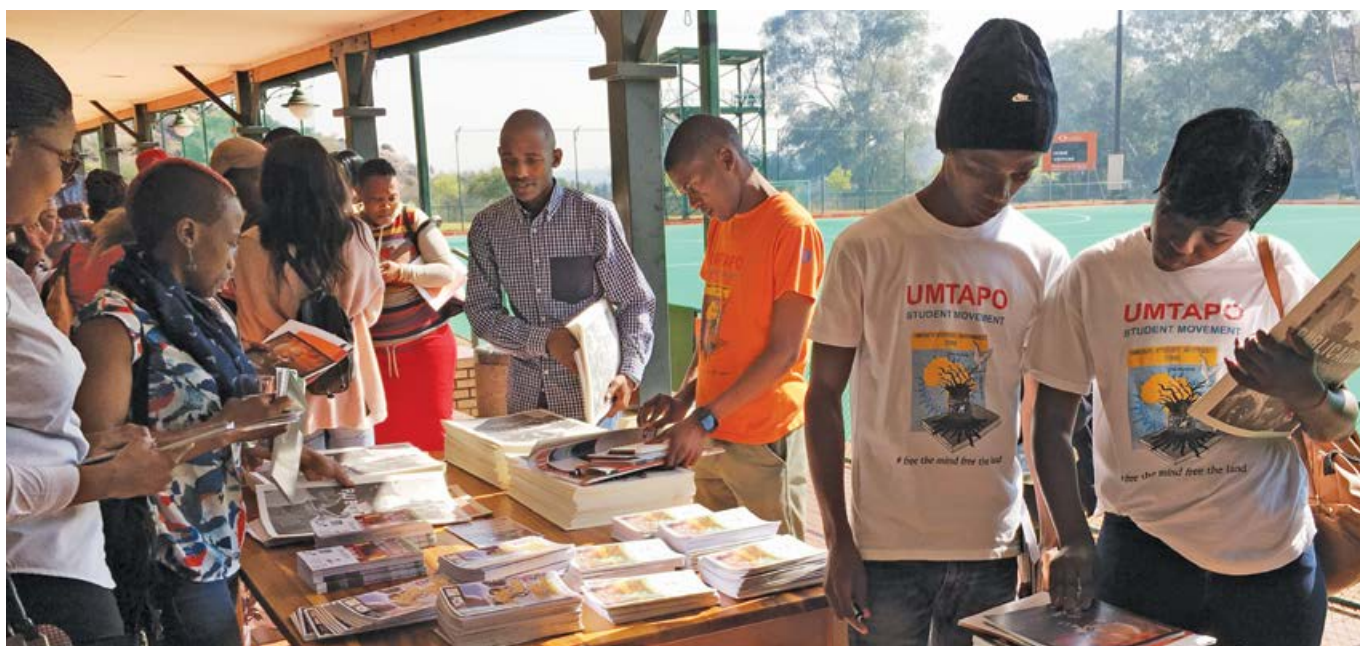
The Annual Commemorative Neville Alexander Conference hosted by CERT (Centre for Education Rights & Transformation) on 8 September 2017 at the University of Johannesburg provided an opportunity for representatives of the UMTAPO Student Movement (USM)

from several universities to participate, interact and reflect on the legacy of Neville Alexander and many of his comrades in the liberation struggle.

The USM delivered an input of Transforming our Uhuru into Ubuntu based on the practical experience of UMTAPO and

its formation of the student movement. This was presented by Xolile Ntuli and Qhawe Vava.

Peace Afrika reprints one of the many accompanying papers that paid tribute to Comrade Neville Alexander, a revolutionary leader who walked the talk.



Towards One Azania, One Nation

by Dr Lydia Cairncross

Neville Alexander was a theoretician, academic, writer and teacher but also, and this will be the focus of my input, a socialist and a revolutionary. A revolutionary in the sense of both engaging with the world we live in, and, more importantly, trying to change it.

The last time I saw Neville was about a week before he died and a few days after the Marikana massacre, which still looms large on our political landscape. He was already very ill and struggled to talk for long periods of time but even then remained interested in understanding this event, what it may mean for South Africa/Azania, and how significant it may be changing our

reality, our world.

And Neville certainly tried to change the world from the time of his early youth when he left Cradock, the town of his birth, and moved to Cape Town to study at UCT. He built and often led a range of organisations, from Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA), Society of Young Africa (SOYA), the Cape Peninsula Student' Union (CPSU) the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), the Yu Chi Chan club, the National Liberation Front, South African College for Higher Education (SACHED), Khanya College, the Cape Action League (CAL) and the National Forum (NF), the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action, the



Worker's List Party, Project for Alternative Education in South Africa, the Langa Youth Reading Group, and the Truth Movement.

He tried to change the world in many ways... by analysing, reading and writing; by being the key theoretician at important national and international political meetings;

by engaging in guerrilla warfare; but also by sitting through endless campaign meetings to plan the minutia of transport, food, agendas, minutes for conferences; by interacting with sometimes conservative and myopic bureaucrats when trying to change policy; by helping to paint placards and banners for demonstrations; by reading to young children on a Saturday morning; by patiently and sometimes not so patiently listening to endless circular arguments of comrades and friends and knowing that this is also part of the struggle. This person, who integrated socialist theory and revolutionary action, is the one I like us to remember, even as we celebrate his rich writings and insightful analyses.

I met Neville when I joined the Workers' Organisation for Socialist Action in 1990. Neville was its first chairperson. From that time until his death in 2012, Neville was for myself, and many others, a key leader of the socialist movement nationally and internationally, even though he would constantly resist such accolades. One of my earliest memories of Neville is going on a door-to-door campaign in Elsies River, collecting the 10 000 signatures required for us to participate in the 1994 elections. Side by side with many others, I sat with Neville through countless meetings: planning meetings, boring meetings, inspiring meetings, Sunday koeksister meetings. We distributed many pamphlets, painted many banners and had many arguments! So I did not know him only, as many of you may, as the university academic, writer and linguist but also as an activist who was experimenting with implementing social change now... and talking about making revolution soon.

On Socialism

So, Neville was a socialist. Not a social democrat, not a liberal educationist but a socialist who believed in the fundamental and radical transformation of society. He believed that this transformation was essential to ensure *"that every child and human being has more than an outside chance of fulfilling their full human potential"*.

Idealists and socialists are somewhat

unpopular and hard to come by these days. As a society, we have become immune to the depth of suffering and deprivation that surrounds our beautiful cities. We are inoculated from a young age to ignore the injustices of this wealthy nation that cannot feed and house its people; where a rampant consumerist and individualistic capitalism is the norm. For many, the violent brutality that holds together this impossible mix of wealth and poverty is only seen through the acts of crime that spill into the quiet leafy suburbs we privileged few inhabit. To believe in a socialist, just, equal world today seems rather other-worldly but as Neville said in his essay: **No god hypothesis required,**

"... if you can believe in heaven and other notions of a life of perfect harmony after death, it ought not to be difficult to conceive of the possibility of a raceless or a classless society here on Earth."

And at the same time, Neville would often couch the core of the socialist philosophy in the simplest biblical terms, quoting his great friend and renowned socialist Ernest Mandel:

"...the most urgent need in our country today is the need to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, house the homeless and care for the sick".

The impetus, driving force and inspiration for Neville's socialism was a deeply felt compassion, respect and warmth for all people.

On Revolution and Revolutionaries

I've mentioned revolution and revolutionary. Because one of the defining features of the left movement of which Neville was a part and which informed all of his work, whether in the education or linguistic arena, was that we did not, and do not, see a gradual transition from the current system of capitalism to a new social, political and economic order. After completing his PhD in Germany, Neville Alexander returned to South Africa and started teaching at Livingstone High School. He was profoundly affected by Sharpeville, writing:

"from the Defiance Campaign to Sharpeville, to Soweto a red line of blood and suffering gave continuity to our struggle through its many valleys and over its few but memorable peaks..."

...and he understood that the Apartheid South African state could not be transformed without armed struggle. He, therefore, began building a guerrilla warfare movement, forming the Yu Chi Chan Club and subsequently the National Liberation Front (NLF). As a result of this pursuit, Neville Alexander was imprisoned on Robben Island from 1964 to 1974. Despite the severity of the incarceration, Neville, along with other political inmates, turned the maximum security prison into the 'University of Robben Island'. While banned and confined to house arrest for five years, in 1979, Neville Alexander published *One Azania, One Nation: The National Question in South Africa* under the penname No Sizwe.

In his Strini Moodley lecture in 2010, entitled *"South Africa, an unfinished revolution"*, Neville speaks to the fact that few thinking South Africans are not shocked and concerned about where South Africa is today and:

"... that most South Africans, certainly most oppressed and exploited South Africans, feel that they have been, if not betrayed, then certainly misled."

And we know this. We live in a South Africa with a widening gap between rich and poor, a nation where our education system cannot teach our children to read, write and add, where quality healthcare is primarily the prerogative of the rich and where the painful continuities of privilege and skin colour are inescapable. Yes, we have the vote, but the other dreams of a bright new nation seen so clearly in the heady days of the 1994 elections have been stillborn. The negotiated settlement drafted in the secret backrooms and the corridors of CODESA from 1990 to 1993 while the rest of the country was ravaged by State-sponsored political violence, ensured that the economic and social fabric of the capitalist South Africa would remain unchanged. A

political revolution, an isolated changing of the guard, has been orchestrated, simultaneously raising and dashing the hopes of millions.

Of course, Neville was aware of the terribly uncomfortable position many well-meaning and genuine ANC leaders find themselves in where, to quote from An Ordinary Country 2002 page 60/61:

"Today there are few people in the leadership of the ANC who do not realise that taking office is not the same thing as taking power. When they complain, as they so often do, that they are being stymied and betrayed by the bureaucracy which they have inherited from the apartheid state, they are in their own naïve way merely confirming the continuity of the capitalist state in South Africa. Whether or not it is fashionable to quote the founders of the modern socialist movement, there is no doubt that the view put forward consistently by men and women such as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Rosa Luxembourg and others that a revolution requires the smashing of the machinery of the old state and the reconstruction of society in the interests of the new ruling class has been completely vindicated in the case of the new South Africa."

And, in South Africa, the Unfinished Revolution he says:

"The final disillusionment will come, of course, when the repressive apparatuses of the state, instead of supporting the exploited classes and other oppressed strata, turn their weapons on the masses to protect the interests of the capitalist class."

This chillingly accurate prediction saw light of day on 16 August 2012 in the events that unfolded on a small but now infamous koppie called Marikana.

On Race and Racism

Neville Alexander was known for his bold and uncompromising stance on race and racism. As far back as 1979, when most liberation movements and most of the

"That this new country, born out of centuries of violent racial oppression, makes no attempt to build an anti-racism movement based on the premise that we belong to one race, the human race, is testimony to the sad fact that societies very seldom learn from history".

scientific community still took the existence of race as axiomatic, in One Azania, One Nation: the National Question in South Africa, Neville wrote:

"... to speak of the 'irrelevance' of 'race' still assumes the reality of 'race' as a biological entity. It is necessary to stress that my position, backed by a growing scientific tradition, leads to an interpretation of 'non-racial' as meaning the denial of the reality of 'race'."

One of the most diabolical features of the new South Africa is how the categories created by Verwoed, 65 years ago and others over the last 400 years have been embraced and promoted unchallenged as appropriate forms of social dialogue and scientific study. That this new country, born out of centuries of violent racial oppression, makes no attempt to build an anti-racism movement based on the premise that we belong to one race, the human race, is testimony to the sad fact that societies very seldom learn from history.

The ongoing requirement at all levels of government bureaucracy for people to categorise themselves has more than erased the brief period in our struggle history in the 1970 and 1980 where people, supported by, among others, the liberatory philosophies of the black consciousness movement, genuinely questioned and rejected their classification into the four race groups we have inherited from Apartheid.

Today, the ongoing use of these categories is promoted as a way to ensure redress. But, to quote Neville:

"Fighting race with race is bad social science and even worse practical politics".

Taken on face value, using race to promote redress is an extremely short-sighted and dangerous policy which, as we have already seen, can very easily erupt into violent racial conflicts. Taken more critically, it can be seen as an attempt to disguise the fact that genuine, fundamental change has not taken place. While a small layer of the black middle class may benefit from these policies and serve to make the surface appearance of corporations and professional bodies more palatable, the fact is that the majority of black South Africans remain trapped in the poverty cycle, unable to find decent education or work while the struggle heroes of yesteryear occupy plush corporate boardrooms.

With a slight of hand, the struggle is made to still be about race when it is in fact about class, 'finish and klaar' to use some of what Neville called good 'South African' language.

For a university such as UCT, the issue of race is critical on many levels. On a social level, it relates to how students on the campus are integrated and at a political level, it is important as it relates to admissions policies and other attempts at social redress. It can be argued that as academics and intellectuals, we are constrained by societal rules and broader issues when it comes to these two areas. The same cannot be said when it comes to the issue of race in science and race in research. Like an enormous elephant in the room, this issue is pointedly ignored by our institutions. The minutia of every scientific category in research studies is examined for accuracy, reproducibility, measurability, etc. and then race is just thrown in unquestioned and unchallenged. Even when race is not part of the study question, it is added in as

an almost knee jerk “demographic”.

The fact that the last objective quantification of Black, Coloured, Indian and White was done by the Verwoerdian population census takers with the aid of hair pencils is just not seen, thought about or discussed. Researchers who question the use of race are seen as difficult, overly sensitive and obstructive.

As an institution of higher learning, what contribution can we make to ameliorate the social devastation being caused by racial prejudice and race-based thinking? We as scientists and academics can at least make clear that while race may be a real social construct and racial prejudice is without a doubt a powerful social force, race as a biological category is non-existent. That we can no longer use the ‘shorthand’ of race to describe social class, education status, language group or any of the other categories that have been used to justify this. The time for this dangerous shorthand is over. Let us do the proper work. If we need to examine the role of diet and economic status on health, let’s evaluate those things. If we want to look at the role of language and or culture on health-seeking behaviour and adherence, let’s ask those questions.

Using race as a lazy social category in our research bolsters its social currency as a rational, justifiable and biological category in a country and world that is tearing itself apart with racial division. It is time to stop creating and recreating race-based thinking in our work. This is within our power and would be a fitting legacy to the Neville Alexander we are honouring tonight.

So, as we gather here today, renaming this building after Neville Alexander, how do we rethink our broader responsibility as intellectuals as agents for social change?

It is easy to become steeped in pessimism and throw our hands up in despair at the mammoth task of building a new country and indeed a new world. Despite many decades of struggle, many moments of triumph and disaster, brilliance and error of both himself and the political left; even though there was no socialist revolution in his lifetime nor any immediate

hope of radical change, in his last book, Neville Alexander shows an unbridled optimism and encourages us to:

“Take a step back and try to get perspective on what has actually been happening since 1990, when the new South Africa began. Even more optimistically, I hope that such a rethink will inspire the reader to find a point of engagement, with a view to initiating or becoming part of trajectories that can lead to that other country most of us had in mind...”

In the discourse and writings of the last few years of his life, Neville talked about a move towards new forms of political organisation; forms that were more open, more responsive and used a new, less rhetorical language, including music, dance, poetry and all forms of culture. To build organisations that recognised that there are many terrains of struggle, organised labour being one, but also education, health, language and the environment. In the conclusion of his last book, Neville encourages us to:

“...rebuild our communities and our neighbourhoods by means of establishing as far as possible on a voluntary basis, all manner of community projects that bring visible short-term benefit to the people and that initiate at the same time the trajectories of fundamental social transformation to which I have been referring”.

When I read this quote, I remember Neville in his 70s; this giant of an intellectual, sitting and reading to preschool children in Langa

at the Vulindlela reading group and then dancing to Brenda Fassie’s catchy tune by that same title. Vulindlela, open the way... This particular community project spoke to his tremendous love of children, of music and of course, of reading too.

So this part is clear. We need to act locally to create a tangible improvement in the lives of our people whether this is by volunteering at local clinics, running reading groups, building cooperatives, enabling food gardens or transforming schools.

But we also need to look at the global picture and the more fundamental change needed. Perhaps taking Neville’s work forward, not as a ‘frozen in time’ set of truths, but rather a series of questions that still need to be answered, can be a beginning.

Perhaps we can take the collective answering of these questions together with local community work as part of the struggle towards revolutionary change. And what are those questions? What do we mean by nation building? What is race and what is its role in the new South Africa? What is democracy: electoral and participatory democracy? How do we hold the State accountable but also be our own liberators by fixing streetlights and cleaning the local park? How do we develop a value system for a new society while crushed by the brutality of the current one? And then out of this, what organisational forms speak to this work and how can they become places where empathy and humanitarianism flourish in the now while we build our vision of a different world for tomorrow?

“Using race as a lazy social category in our research bolsters its social currency as a rational, justifiable and biological category in a country and world that is tearing itself apart with racial division. It is time to stop creating and recreating race based thinking in our work. This is within our power and would be a fitting legacy to the Neville Alexander we are honouring.”

2017 Steve Biko Seminar

The STEVE BIKO seminar with the theme BIKO40: THE QUEST FOR TRUE HUMANITY CONTINUES took place on Friday, 21 September 2017 at the Durban University of Technology, Ritson Campus in Durban.

The speakers were carefully chosen to represent different perspectives and experiences of Black Consciousness.

Leigh-Ann Naidoo

She is a PhD student in the School of Education at Wits University. Her work is on the role of education in building political movements and her masters focused on the formation of the black consciousness movement and its relation to education. She is currently looking at questions related to the formation of black intellectuals. Leigh-Ann has just joined the Adult Education Unit at the School of Education, University of Cape Town.

Mphutlane wa Bofelo

He is a South African poet and essayist, cultural worker and social critic who is influenced and inspired by Black Consciousness, Sufism, and radical humanism/socialist humanism. He teaches Political and Social Development at Workers' College in Durban. Bofelo is the author of six books and his works have appeared in various journals, including McGill Journal of Education, Pambazuka News, Itch, Laugh it Off, and Centre for Civil Society – UKZN Online Library. Currently, he is working on a book titled Transition Blues: Exploring the Historical Consciousness of 'The Born Free' Generation.

Marjan Boelsma

She is a former chairperson of the Dutch anti-apartheid solidarity group Azania Komitee, a group that supported the Azanian tendency among the liberation movements. She has been associated with Umtapo Centre since 1992. She is a patron of UMTAPO Centre. Marjan's political activism spans more than 40 years of rigorous action for a more just world.

She received UMTAPO's Steve Biko International Peace Award in 2010. Marjan is currently developing the archives of Azania Komitee for the International Institute of Social History. Her work in social activism includes provoking debate and organising programmes to put anti-racism



and decolonisation on the agenda in the Netherlands.

Speakers spoke passionately of the role of BC in the struggle for liberation and its continued relevance around the world where the agenda of white supremacy is once more rearing its ugly head.

Leigh-Ann Naidoo, who was active in the Fallist movement, said "The quest for true humanity or the revolution is a never-ending quest".

The Fallist movement, she said, has fractured into many splinters, one could also say caucuses, as students have fought for recognition of multiple struggles and oppressions present in the plenary space. An important contributor, she pointed out, is how people analyse the causes of oppression and which lenses one uses to plot a revolutionary path out of oppression to liberation.

One should not forget, she added, that historically, this has been a question of debate between the primacy of race vs class oppression. Oppression based on gender has also been around but has been consistently and historically sidelined in resistance movements that were largely dominated by men.

The new student movement's insistence on the principles and ideas of black radical feminists, that was being read and argued for by black women and queer students, complexified the analyses in ways that

many believed distracted and fractured the movement.

The counter argument is that the inability of mainly men in the movement to recognise their own privilege and, therefore, the ways in which they as activists/revolutionaries were oppressing comrades, was/is the reason for the splintering. Also, that simply reproducing BC and Pan-Afrikanist politics for the present would not bring anything significantly new to the table for consideration when analysing the current conditions in order to collectively create a new way forward.

Marjan Boelsma said, "Forty years ago, white allies dominating the anti-apartheid movements accused Steve Biko of racism and serving the interests of western imperialism. After his violent death, they claimed Biko for the ANC and aligned him to the UDF. At the same time, these white allies did not put energy into fighting institutional and structural racism in their own country and made no connection with our cruel Dutch colonial history. They only worried about keeping things comfortable for white people. That meant no platforms, no support for the radical liberation movements such as BCM and PAC, and only projecting the ANC as a palatable organisation."

White supremacy was on the rise, she said. White privilege is becoming the order of the day. She urged that people sacrifice their position and power as anti-racism is no charity – they should face up to the realities of breaking down white supremacy.

SPECIAL FOCUS

In the month of October, we remember two iconic revolutionaries who were murdered and who epitomised the rare qualities of ethical leadership: Thomas Sankara and Che Guevara.

Remembering Thomas Sankara on the 30th Anniversary of his Assassination

Dr Amber Murrey, Postdoctoral Fellow at the American University in Cairo, Egypt

Thomas Sankara (1949-1987) was assassinated 30 years ago on 15 October 1987. He was one of the most outspoken anti-imperialist leaders of the late 20th century. Sankara's life and political praxis continue to be significant in shaping and inspiring anti-imperial and Pan-African youth activism and resistance across the African continent and beyond.

Sankara was a militant economic revolutionary who aimed to achieve social justice at home through a prioritisation of food justice while recalibrating Burkina Faso's place in the international system. Unlike most of the African leaders of his generation and those preceding him, Sankara did not author books that captured or guided his political philosophy in any systematic way. Indeed, Sankara refused to give an ideological name to the revolution.

During an interview with Jean-Philippe Rapp in 1985, Sankara said:

"I would like to leave behind me the conviction that if we maintain a certain amount of caution and organization we deserve victory [...]. You cannot carry out fundamental change without a certain amount of madness. In this case, it comes from nonconformity, the courage to turn your back on the old formulas, the courage to invent the future. It took the madmen of yesterday for us to be able to act with extreme clarity today. I want to be one of those madmen. [...] We must dare to invent the future."

Sankara understood the immensities and dangers of the revolutionary project before him. He knew that he would be perceived as a 'madman' for fighting against a powerful

global and regional economic elite. After just four years and two months as president, Sankara was assassinated by Liberian mercenaries who had been trained in Libya, with ideological support from Cote D'Ivoire, France and the US under the leadership of his closest friend, Blaise Compaoré.

When his autopsy was finally released to the public in October 2015, it revealed that his body had been riddled with bullet holes, including one just under his armpit. He was killed with his hands in the air. The autopsy confirmed what Halouna Traoré, the only living survivor of the assassination, had long maintained: Sankara went peacefully and knowingly to his death.

During his life, Sankara spoke often of radical Black leaders who were being assassinated all around him, Maurice Bishop among them. Although he was only 33 years old when he became president, he referred to his wife as 'la veuve' (the widow). This was a darkly humorous title – one that revealed his awareness of the probability of his premature death as well as his absence of fear in regards to it.

Sovereignty, not 'Development Aid'

For Sankara, politics was praxis. He prioritised the politicisation of non-elites and non-specialists in a determination to

do, make, and effect social change. As he reminded the audience during one speech, "What is left for us to do is [to] make the revolution!" Revolution, for Sankara, was more than a 'passing revolt' or a 'simple brushfire'. Rather, the political economy of Burkina needed to be "replaced forever with the revolution, the permanent struggle against all forms of domination" (Sankara, *Freedom Must be Conquered*, 1984).

His praxis was deeply populist. Sankara's political philosophy shows an undaunted attention to the grassroots, saying that "singers, dancers, and musicians" can equally stand with formal representatives of the revolutionary party to "explain... what the revolution should be" (Sankara *Our White House in Black Harlem*, 1984). Sankara understood his role as that of critical space-maker: he sought to create the socio-economic and political conditions for well-being, integrity, and empowerment with the understanding that these were not material goods to be given or passed around. His revolutionary orientation was founded upon an insistence that all Burkinabè be free and empowered but that genuine self-empowerment was something to be cultivated through hard work and seized through struggle rather than allotted by the government or given through international aid.

He rejected the premise of 'aid' for victimising the people of Burkina Faso as well as for stripping them of agency. This stripping of agency occurred on multiple levels: it was both intellectual, through the insinuation that local solutions were unlikely (this was a form of mental colonisation), as well as tangible, through the suppression of an environment in which people's own creativity could lead to innovative responses to local dilemmas.

Addressing the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 4 October 1984, Sankara identified ignorance, hunger, and thirst as equally important for the aspirations of the revolution. His role, as he articulated it, was to set in place the economic, political, and social structures that would allow all Burkinabè to pursue their own dignity, knowledge, and well-being: "Our economic aspiration is to create a situation where every Burkinabè can at least use his brain and hands to invent and create enough to ensure him two meals a day and drinking water" (Sankara, *Freedom Must be Conquered*, 1984).

In this project of dignity and liberation, he recognised his limitations and challenges. Again, this approach reflected his humble but urgent approach to politics. On the topic of women's liberation, he said, "we are ready to welcome suggestions from anywhere in the world that enable us to achieve the total fulfillment of Burkinabè women... Freedom can only be won through struggle, and we call on all our sisters of all races to go on the offensive to conquer their rights" (Sankara, *Freedom Must be Conquered*, 1984).

While working to foster growth in national pride, creativity and self-sufficiency, Sankara confronted the material conditions of poverty in what was one of the world's most impoverished countries. In order to embark upon a series of ambitious countrywide health, sanitation and environmental initiatives, the government required funds. To raise these funds, Sankara insisted that people make material sacrifices, particularly government officials and members of the urban petite bourgeoisie.

A Radical Activist as President

Sankara was ambitious, driven and often uncompromising. His presidency offers a



The revolution and women's liberation go together. We do not talk of women's emancipation as an act of charity or out of a surge of human compassion. It is a basic necessity for the revolution to triumph. Women hold up the other half of the sky.

— Thomas Sankara —

glimpse into what it looks like when a militant activist becomes the leader of a country. His speeches and activities often resembled those of radical social justice activists more than heads of state. Sankara maintained his captain's salary of \$450 during his four years and two months as president. He wore cloth spun from Burkinabè cloth, the *faso dan fani*, and encouraged (or demanded) that other members of the government to do the same.

As president, he would share rations with his troops, as his chauffeur, Sidibé Alassane, recalled in an interview in 2017. Some displays of this sort of radically humble and down-to-earth living were not well received by all government officials. After one particular meeting, Sankara announced to his ministers that they would go and eat lunch together at a nearby restaurant. The group applauded in apparent pleasure, until he named the restaurant: Yidigri, a restaurant serving mostly low-income clientele near the Yalgado Hospital. After lunch, Sankara announced that each minister would pay their own bills – along with the bills of their chauffeurs. The event was intended to be a lesson in collectivism, unpretentiousness and generosity – all pillars of Sankara's political praxis – but not everyone welcomed or appreciated these public effacements of social privilege.

Arguments that Sankara's humble lifestyle was adopted merely for public audiences do not hold up to more thorough considerations of his politics – all aspects of which reflect a radical way of living. His wife, Miriam Sankara, recalls that Sankara would sleep on the terrace during warm nights because he did not want to run the air-conditioning when others were sleeping

without it. At the time of his death, Sankara owned little and was quite possibly one of the poorest heads of state in the world. Among his possessions at the time of his death were four bicycles, a car, three guitars, and a refrigerator. Take, on the other hand, Blaise who, according to one account, has an estimated net worth of \$275 million.

Sankara understood that part of his role would be a rejection of silence in the face of widespread hunger, thirst and neo-colonialism. He used his international platform to address the historical foundations of poverty and to reject to contribute, even through silence, to the perpetuation of such a system. He said,

"I protest here on behalf of all those who vainly seek a forum [at the United Nations General Assembly] in this world where they can make their voice heard and have it genuinely taken into consideration. Many have preceded me at this podium and others will follow. But only few will make the decisions... I am acting as a spokesperson for all those who vainly seek a forum in this world where they can make themselves heard. So yes, I wish to speak on behalf of all 'those left behind', for 'I am human, [and] nothing that is human is alien to me.'" (Sankara, *Freedom Must be Conquered*, 1984)

Sankara's political leadership is a powerful example of how governments might re-orient to support the people as the people work to achieve their own fulfillment and well-being. His legacy shows that another politics is possible. Yet, this brazen pro-people political orientation remains so dangerous a challenge to the established economic order that it continues to be dismissed as "a certain amount of madness".

Che Guevara 1928–1967

The following is an article written by VIJAY PRASHAD, Chief Editor of LeftWord Books. He is working on a book on Third World Communism.



A Revolutionary Power to Heal

In a letter to his five children written en route to Bolivia, Ernesto Che Guevara said: “Always be able to feel deep within your being all the injustices committed against anyone, anywhere in the world. This is the most beautiful quality a revolutionary can have.” Che’s legacy remains a doctor’s love for humanity.

Cuba, only 90 miles away from the mainland of the US, would remain vulnerable unless other revolutions succeeded in the world. His reaction to the violent US bombardment of Vietnam had been similar – not enough to defend Vietnam, he had said, but it was necessary ‘to create two, three, many Vietnams’. Failure to spark revolution in Congo led Che to Bolivia, where its army trapped him. He was eventually captured and brought to a schoolhouse. Mario Terán Salazar, a soldier, was tasked with the assassination. Che looked at this quivering man. “Calm down and take good aim,” he told him. “You’re going to kill a man.” Che died on his feet (aged 39).

From a man, Ernesto Guevara (born in 1928) became a myth. It is difficult not to be moved by the life of this Argentinian doctor who became a revolutionary.

Radicalised by Reality

His tutelage in revolutionary thought came from his experiences among the leprosy patients of Venezuela and the tin miners of Bolivia, among the revolutionaries of Argentina and the 1954 coup in Guatemala. Reality radicalised him. Only later would he recount that he had been influenced by, as he put it, ‘the doctrine of San Carlos’, his sly reference to Karl Marx.

In 1953, in Mexico, Guevara met Hilda

Gadea, a revolutionary from the Peruvian APRA (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance). Gadea schooled Guevara in Marxist theory and in the radical currents then inflaming the region. They moved to Guatemala in September 1954, which was then in the midst of a major struggle against the US government and US-based corporations. A democratically elected government led by Jacobo Árbenz attempted to conduct basic land reforms, which ran afoul of the United Fruit

Company. Guevara was marked by the role of this corporation in governing Guatemala.

To his aunt Beatriz, he wrote, “I have had an opportunity to go through the land owned by United Fruit, and this has once again convinced me of the vileness of these capitalist octopuses. I have sworn before a portrait of old, tearful Comrade Stalin not

“Always be able to feel deep within your being all the injustices committed against anyone, anywhere in the world. This is the most beautiful quality a revolutionary can have.”

Che



to rest until these capitalist octopuses have become annihilated. I will better myself in Guatemala and become a true revolutionary.”

When the US initiated the coup against Arbenz's government, Guevara took to the streets. No good came of it. Guevara and Gadea fled to Mexico. It was there that they, thanks to Gadea, met Raul Castro and eventually his brother Fidel. Not long after, Guevara would board a rickety boat, the Granma, with the Castros and 79 others to launch the Cuban Revolution. When their boat arrived in Cuba, the military killed 70 of the revolutionaries. The survivors rushed inland, and with sheer grit proceeded to build the peasant army that eventually overcame the US-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista at the close of 1958.

The young revolutionaries inherited a

bankrupt country. Batista had shifted \$424 million of Cuban reserves to US banks. Loans were not forthcoming. In a late night meeting, Castro asked if there were an economist among them. Che raised his hand. He became the head of the economy. Later, when Castro asked him about these credentials, Che answered that he thought Castro had asked, “Who is a communist?” Che took to his task with energy and determination.

The US had set an embargo against the island in 1962. It suffocated Cuba. The Uruguayan journalist Eduardo Galeano went to interview Che in 1964. “I don't want every Cuban to wish he were a Rockefeller,” Guevara said. He wanted to build socialism, a system that “purified people, moved them beyond egoism, saved them from competition and greed”. It was a daunting task, made difficult by the poverty of the treasury and of the population; although the Cuban people's spirit drove them to volunteer their labour to build their resources.

The Cuba Years

“Cuba will never be a showcase of socialism,” Guevara told Galeano, “but

rather a living example.” It was too poor to become paradise. It could, however, exude love for its own people and for the world. For Guevara, love was everything, key to his idea of socialism.

The Afterword

As for the fate of those who killed Guevara 50 years ago, Bolivian dictator René Barrientos died a year later when his helicopter burst into flames. General Joaquín Zenteno Anaya, who led the operation against Che, was shot to death in the streets of Paris. Major Andrés Selich Chop, who led the Rangers to capture Che, was killed by the dictatorship of Hugo Banzer. Monika Ertl, a member of the National Liberation Army of Bolivia, killed Colonel Roberto Quintanilla Perez, who had announced Che's death to the world, in Hamburg.

Mario Terán Salazar, the soldier who shot Che, went into hiding. Many years later, in 2006, the Cuban government operated on Che's killer to remove a cataract from his eye without charge. Che's legacy was not revenge. It remains a doctor's love for humanity.

50 Years Later: 2017

Thousands gathered on 9 October 2017 in a small town in southern Bolivia where the leader of the Cuban revolution Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara was executed by CIA-backed Bolivian soldiers 50 years ago.

Bolivia's President Evo Morales camped in a sleeping bag and tent and welcomed dignitaries from allies Cuba and Venezuela during the commemoration ceremonies.

Bolivian President Evo Morales presided over the main event marking the 50th anniversary of the death of Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara and his fellow combatants.

Attended by Che's four children, along with Harry Villegas and Leonardo

Tamayo, both members of Che's guerrilla group in Bolivia, and thousands of members of political and social movements, Morales said that the moment was ripe to relaunch the anti-imperialist struggle, one of Che's main legacies.

“Today, as we commemorate half a century of Commandante Che Guevara's passing to eternity, we are united in a single anti-imperialist, anti-colonial and anti-capitalist battle cry,” adding that Che left home with dreams of fighting for a world without ‘rich people’ and ‘social classes’.”



He added that the best way to honour Che and build a world in which basic human rights have been secured is to continue his ‘anti-imperialist fight’, stressing the need to foster new international humanitarianism and the tearing down of the imaginary walls separating the world's peoples.



NO LONGER AN OBJECT

wathint'abafazi wathint'imbokodo
A TURNING POINT!

THE INAUGURAL **OSHADI MANGENA GENDER DIALOGUE**, AS PART OF UMTAPO'S
STEVE BIKO TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION PROJECT, WILL TAKE PLACE ON
24th NOVEMBER 2017 FROM 09h30-13h00 AT THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (DUT)
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DUT GENDER FORUM

Dr Oshadi Mangena, political and gender activist and patron of UMTAPO, passed away on 24 September 2015. She played a key role in the planning of UMTAPO's 10-day Women and Development Course which was conducted in all nine provinces in the 1990s.


Oshadi worked for the Christian Institute of Southern Africa (CI) after leaving her career as a nurse. In the early 1970s, she joined the Black People's Convention, the political wing of the Black Consciousness Movement and collaborated actively with the Pretoria branch of the South African Student's Association (SASO).

Oshadi was arrested after the June '76 uprising and spent months at The Old Fort prison, now Constitution Hill and was eventually banned and restricted to Mamelodi township in Pretoria.

In April 1977, she went into exile where she worked closely with the BCM's external wing. She was based in the Netherlands where she completed her doctoral studies and eventually lectured at the University of Amsterdam until she returned to South Africa in 1994 to continue with the struggle against injustice and oppression.

The continuing objectification and abuse of women in the country and globally in spite of the countless initiatives that attempt to address the issue is a growing matter of concern. With UMTAPO's work around the country with women and children, from the villages of Peddie in the EC to Madodonga in the far north of Limpopo, the cry to **SMASH PATRIARCHY** has never been louder.

It is time to reach a TURNING POINT!



STEVE BIKO
Transformative Education Project

IN MEMORY OF
MBULELO MZAMANE, STRINI MOODLEY,
NEVILLE ALEXANDER & OSHADI MANGENA

Includes:

- STEVE BIKO SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS
- ANNUAL STRINI MOODLEY LECTURE
- ANNUAL MBULELO MZAMANE SEMINAR
- NEVILLE ALEXANDER EDUCATION PROJECT
- OSHADI MANGENA WOMEN'S DIALOGUE

ONLINE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER:
Speaking Truth to Power

